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THROUGH

ITALY,

IN THE YEARS

1804 AND 1805.

BY

AUGUSTUS VON KOTZEBUE,

AUTHOR OF

TRAVELS IN SIBERIA AND IN FRANCE,

&c. &c.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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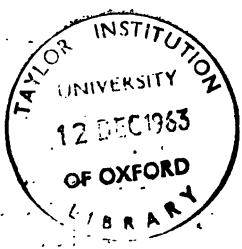
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TRAVELS

IN

ITALY.

MOUNT VESUVIUS.

EVERY part of the kingdom of Naples abounds with curiosities more or less important. The two most distinguished are, according to my feelings, the town of Pompeii, and mount Vesuvius. Whoever could stay here only a few days, would be amply rewarded by having traversed the former and ascended the latter. I commence with the mountain, without which indeed the town would not exist in its present state.

When I came to Naples it had ceased to emit fire; its eruptions consisted now of lava, which afforded me a sight sufficiently grand, though by the inhabitants it was totally disregarded. Vesuvius lay opposite to my window. When it was dark I could clearly perceive how the masses of

fire rolled down the mountain. As long as any glimmering of light remained, that part of the mountain was to be seen, on the declivity of which the lava formed a straight but oblique line. As soon, however, as it was perfectly dark, and the mountain itself vanished from the eye, it seemed as if a comet with a long tail stood in the sky. In eight or ten days the brilliancy became gradually less; and at last totally died away, leaving nothing but smoke.

I waited long for a perfectly serene day, in order to take a near view of this workshop of Vulcan. At length the thirteenth of November arrived; and invited me, by clear but rather too hot summer weather, to this fatiguing excursion. I set out in the company of some friends, with some bottles of wine. We drove to the little town Resina, situated beyond Portici; where we alighted, and were immediately surrounded by a crowd of men who offered us their asses and mules, and even their own arms and legs. We were soon mounted. Instead of a bridle every ass had a cord, and that too only on the right side: the

saddle was tolerably convenient. A *cicerone* led the van, carrying the provisions: each ass also had its leader by its side, who exhorted it in encouraging words to hold up bravely. His principal expression was a single syllable, resembling in sound *au* or *aum*, which he uttered very hastily. When that was ineffectual, he goaded the beast with a stick behind; and in steep or rough parts he helped him as well as he could. Thus we proceeded a tolerable distance upwards through the town. The inhabitants, accustomed to such cavalcades, did not laugh at us; but we could not help laughing at ourselves. The asses are tolerably sure-footed, but not so much so as the mules. One of my companions fell, with his poor beast, on the slippery pavement of the town; but very fortunately received little hurt.

With much pleasantry and good-humour we reached the open country, and began to climb. The way winds amidst vineyards encompassed by walls of lava, and interspersed with little cheerful houses. Here is produced the renowned wine called

lacrymæ Christi, which will probably survive its reputation. Now and then the men halted, to shew us a stream of lava which had flowed in a particular year.

We had scarcely ascended during a quarter of an hour, when we began to hear the roaring of the mountain. The cicerone assured us that a new gulf had opened in the preceding night. The smoke did not appear considerable. The higher we came, the more scanty the vegetation grew; but the decrease was so gradual as not to be perceived. The tendrils of the vineyards continued to interweave with one another: and I found, to my astonishment, at a very considerable height, even poplars; which I had not expected to see on this dry mountain.

We continued to climb for about an hour, while Vesuvius opened more clearly upon our view. The road now turned to the left; towards the *Somma*, its neighbour, which in very distant periods formed a united gulf of fire with it, and is now externally separated from it. Here we see the proper cone of Vesuvius, called the cone of ashes, which

has a horrid sea of dross for its basis. Every thing on our right hand was black or dark-grey. Here and there a small parched plant alone discovered itself; but not a single bird fluttered over this desert, nor a lizard crept through the sharp stones: while on our left hand the summer was still in all its freshness. Thus we wandered on the borders of the kingdom of destruction, till we wound up through a steep rock of lava, to the well-known hermitage on the Somma. Here the friendly tenant received us, and offered us refreshments; but we staid only a short time to enjoy the charming view, which (according to my custom) I shall not describe, and then hastened to attain our grand object.

We trotted on about another quarter of an hour, up the narrow passage of the Somma, without much inconvenience; but were then obliged to descend into the sea of dross, where a narrow footpath in the ashes wound through the jagged pieces of lava. These were merely steep hills, stretching forth their rough points; and our asses made their way up and down them with great fa-

cility. We here heard a rustling like that of a high wind; which latter, however, we did not feel. Nature appeared around us to have died in hoary old age, amidst convulsions; and the sight of her corpse caused a cold thrilling through our veins.

We were now at the foot of the cone of ashes; and at this spot we left our wearied beasts, in order to execute with our full and undiminished powers the last and most difficult part of the task. The heat of the sun, though on the thirteenth of November, invited us to throw off our clothes. Each guide hung a strong strap over his shoulder, which we took hold of. The cicerone went on before, and we followed in pairs.

At first the way was easy. The crumbled but hard lava was trodden on with facility; and as I am no novice in climbing mountains, I began to flatter myself with finding the difficulties and fatigues of this journey far below my expectation. But our ground was too soon converted into mere ashes; the road, though inclining obliquely along the surface of the mountain, became more and more steep; the pace forwards very

often slipped back into the track of the preceding one, or at least, it was always taken more than half in vain; the hollow rumbling in the gulf of the mountain on our left hand, and the precipice yawning on our right, and which grew deeper as we advanced, discouraged us a little, and we were often obliged to halt in order to collect strength. But these very resting-places afforded us little ease: for the soil on which we stood was so loose, that in a few moments we sunk, by our own weight, above the ancles, into the ashes; and whoever was inclined to be giddy was obliged to take care that he did not look into the abyss on his right hand. And to direct the eye to the top of the mountain was by no means consolatory; for, alas! it was still at such a distance. However, our indefatigable guides incessantly inspirited us: we continued climbing assiduously; and in three-quarters of an hour we were so near the mountain, that we could clearly distinguish a company of travellers who had already attained the summit.

This sight gave us new courage; and by

a few minutes more of tedious climbing, we hoped to accomplish our object: when suddenly we saw a wall before us, which the volumes of fire, by some late operation, had concentrated and erected into a jagged pile. Our cicerone started; and it was evident that this obstacle was new to him. To get over it, appeared impossible; and it was no less impossible to stay hanging on the steep mountain, like a nest of swallows. No one would have resolved on returning: we therefore determined to go round it on the dross. In order to effect this, we were obliged to descend a little; and here the ashes proved quite different, and almost similar to steel-filings, so that they clogged our feet at every step. We passed, however, happily through them; and when we had reached the same height as before, we stood at once on a crust covering the fiery stream. The heat penetrated through the soles of our shoes, and was even plainly felt on our cheeks. The lava had various crevices, which all smoked; and when we put a stick into them, the flame immediately burst out. It was too hot and dangerous to

stay long here; yet as we were only about fifty steps from the crater, one of my companions wished to go further on, over the thinly covered sea of flames. But this was impossible: we were obliged to return the same way, and wind round the colder masses of lava. I was the first of our company; and followed my guide, who led me to the top by a footpath of ashes.

Here I stood on a narrow spot of mountain; separated by a smoking cavity, at the utmost ten paces in breadth, from a similar one which served as the border of the crater. How shall I find words to delineate all that I saw and heard? Yet the simplest description is fitted to the sublimest objects. —From the middle of the crater ascended the sulphureous yellow cone which the eruption of the present year has formed: on the other side of it, a thick smoke perpetually arose from the abyss opened during the preceding night. The side of the crater opposite to me, which rose considerably higher than that on which I stood, afforded a singular aspect; for it was co-

vered with little pillars of smoke, that broke forth from it and appeared almost like extinguished lights. The air over the crater was actually embodied: it was very clearly to be seen in a trembling motion. It boiled and roared dreadfully below, like the most violent hurricane; but sometimes (and this made the strongest impression on me) a sudden deadly stillness ensued for some moments, after which the roaring recommenced with double vehemence, and the smoke burst forth in thicker and blacker clouds. It was as if the Spirit of the mountain had suddenly tried to stop the gulf, but the flames indignantly refused to endure the confinement. As far as my eye reached, the volcano had spread its horribly gaudy carpet: the yellow sulphur, the black dross, the dazzling white salt, the grey pumice-stone, the moss-green copper, the metal spangles,—all seemed collected together to form this infernal mosaic floor. The lesser opening smoked close before me in several places: and where the smoke broke out, small stones were loosened every now

and then from the sloping wall, and rolled down; the only noise which, besides the roaring of the mountain, met the ear.

I did not contemplate this awful and sublime spectacle without emotions of terror, but I felt as if enchained to the spot. Two of my companions had ventured to press still nearer, over the rugged points of lava and burning crevices, and through clouds of sulphureous vapour. They did not, however, observe any thing more than I did, except a greater portion of the sulphureous cone. The most remarkable object they met with was, a *lady* (the duchess Della Torre) walking on this dangerous spot. Her husband, who was making scientific observations on the mountain for the purpose of publication, stood near me, very much occupied with his experiments; and appeared as perfectly at his ease as if he had been at home in his study.

Full of the sensations inspired by the sublimest spectacle of nature, and happy at having accomplished our object, we commenced our journey back. This is usually

represented by travellers as very easy and commodious. For my part, I confess it was more difficult to me than the ascent. It is indeed more expeditious; for at every step voluntarily taken, we slip downwards two paces further: but the knees soon begin to totter; and on reaching again the crumbled lava, the progress is very painful. I was obliged to hold my guide by the collar, to prevent my falling, twenty times. We at length, however, reached our asses in perfect safety; richly laden with the plunder of the mountain, and accompanied by its hollow groans.

But before I mount my beast, let me say a few words on the general subject of this pilgrimage; which is described by some travellers as very painful, and by others as very easy. It is neither. Whoever, indeed, does not concern himself about human torture, may render it even convenient to himself: he need only do as the hereditary prince of this place lately did; who had two stout fellows to draw him along by his arms, while two others pushed him behind,

so that he went up easily enough. Or he may cause himself to be carried in a sedan chair by eight men (as the princess did); and may then read a novel on his way. But it is not every one's talent to be able to derive enjoyment from ease thus purchased by the excessive exertions of others. I confess that the ascending would be a mere trifle for any one accustomed to climbing, if the whole path did not consist of ashes: this alone makes it fatiguing. Yet if a lady ever ventures up (and many have already ventured) at a time when the mountain rages as now, I should pronounce her to be a female of tolerably stout nerves.

The last eruption of Vesuvius was very *gallant*. The ladies formed parties by hundreds for Torre dell Annunciata, directly opposite the mouth from which the lava flowed. There they walked composedly to the foot of the mountain, stood on the border of the fiery current, wantonly jumped over its narrow arms backward and forward, and actually placed themselves before the

stream, and waited its coming: all this was unattended with danger; as it rolled on very slowly, or rather drove its great scaly waves deliberately over one another, till they lost their equilibrium by being piled up, and rushed down again like a cataract —which afforded full time for escaping in safety.

We reached the friendly hermitage, cheerful but wearied; and did not a second time decline the invitation to enter this humble dwelling. We found one chamber, that contained the welcome luxury of a tolerably soft sofa. The decoration of the walls as it now appeared may probably not remain long in that state: I hasten therefore to give it durability on paper. An expert artist had been there some time before; and had sketched with charcoal, over the chimney-piece, the good-natured face of the host, as large as life. He had probably been in company with Lucian Buonaparte; for the latter with his wife, and several other French faces, were drawn round about in great me-

dallions on the walls, with charcoal. I found this *princely* pair, as well as the hermit, great likenesses.

Here is, of course, a sort of memorandum-book kept, in which every one who wanders thus far inserts his name, and adds at pleasure any thing else, whether stupid or clever. What a mass of nonsense did it contain! Many of the writers had been seized with a troublesome sensibility, and these were the most intolerable: they had expectorated the whole of their sensations on "the grand prospect," and "the monstrous volcano." One had even maintained that the flames had contemplated him with gaiety. Others had recorded sorry jests and disgusting witticisms: one, for example, related that his sly chambermaid Lisetta had fallen from her ass in the journey;—it is a wonder that he did not describe her posture. This medley was to be found in all languages: but I confess that on a slight perusal, it seemed to me that the Germans had written the most nonsense; at least, they affected the greatest sensibility. Yet

the perusal of these books is a pleasant pastime for people who have nothing else to do in the desert habitation which they here find. It is a pity only that the volumes already filled are no longer extant, but have been disposed of. There is now but one full, and a second which is just begun.

The hermit set before us bread and cheese, and very good *lachrymæ Christi* of his own growth. He was very communicative, but the circle of his ideas did not extend beyond the gulf of Naples. The most interesting part of his discourse was his description of three shocks from an earthquake in the preceding night; which had shaken his house to such a degree that, to use his own expression, all the teeth chattered in his head. Upon this occasion a new gulf had opened in the interior of the crater, and the rustling and roaring in the inside of it (but which had already ceased) led to an apprehension that the eruption of this year was not yet at an end, but that a more dreadful return was to be expected. We could not resist the selfish idea that the

sooner this should happen the better for the gratification of our curiosity. After having refreshed ourselves, we left the hermitage, and descended the mountain on foot; for the riding down is far more troublesome than up, and often prevents the traveller from yielding with perfect freedom to the current of his feelings. At Resina we resumed our station in the carriages; and after seven hours of real enjoyment in this pilgrimage, returned, very comfortably disposed both in mind and body, to Naples.

Whoever has Pliny at hand, and understands his language, should read his masterly description of the eruption in the seventy-ninth year after the birth of Christ, which buried Pompeii and Herculaneum. The ashes flew to Rome, and even over the Mediterranean. The birds were suffocated in the air, and the fish died in the sea; which then washed the walls of Pompeii, but, in the unequal contest with the stronger element, retreated for miles.

This was succeeded, at intervals shorter or longer, by eruptions of various magni-

tudes. One of the most dreadful was that in the year 1633; when not only streams of fire flowed on all sides, and even dried up the haven of Naples, but also floods of salt water overspread the whole country.

The eruption ten years ago (in 1794) was equally desolating. It announced itself by three earthquakes; which, like heralds, proclaimed the anger of the boiling mountain. The declivity of the latter suddenly opened, and a bright fire burst out with such violence from this yawning cavity, that, according to the description of the hermit, it looked as if it were blown up by immense bellows. Soon afterwards four lesser openings were seen; from which issued columns of fire and smoke, forked lightnings, red-hot stones, ashes, and flames. At Naples a number of religious processions were made, and the people prayed till their knees were sore. The inhabitants of the towns at the foot of the mountain, and among others those of Torre del Greco, had been driven by the earthquake from their houses, and surveyed in the open field the shocking spectacle.

When the lava now poured forth and directed its course to Resina, the people of Torre del Greco lamented the misfortune which threatened their neighbours; but the stream suddenly turned, and desolated the road to their own town. Their terror made them scarcely able to escape by flight from the swift-spreading flood: their effects were all abandoned and destroyed. The stream reached the town with rapidity, divided into currents, and encompassed the buildings; which it overthrew, set on fire, and annihilated: whatever was for a time spared, the shower of glowing ashes consumed. St. Mary's cloister was still standing undamaged, swimming (as it were) in a sea of fire: two persons screamed out from it for assistance, but it was not possible to save them. The next day, when a crust like a red-hot plate of metal covered the stream of flames, the unfortunate wretches ventured over it with winged feet. They succeeded, but not without having suffered the pain of a thousand deaths.

The streets of Naples were covered with ashes; which lay five inches deep in the royal palace at Portici, and above an inch near the lava. The latter had occupied the high road for a great distance; and rolled at length into the sea, where the surrounding water was boiling, and the fish were dying. The fine fruitful country was desolated, and eighteen thousand persons were reduced to beggary. But the mountain had spent its rage at its own expence also, for a fifth part of its summit was sunk on the south side. A crashing noise still continued to threaten with new terrors: and yet, like a busy swarm of ants who set about repairing their hill that has been trodden down by the heedless foot of a bear, though uncertain whether their enemy the next minute will lift up his paw to renew the destruction,—thus the terrified inhabitants soon assembled round the smoking ruins; dug themselves, with their feet, narrow paths through the ashes to their wretched habitations; and collected, in tears, the few remains of their

effects yet unconsumed.—In Trinity-church all the silver utensils were found undamaged, which just before had been prepared for a festival. This passed, of course, for a miracle. What miracle may we not next expect to be framed by the prolific brain of superstition? There are also several *incontestable* examples of the volcano having suddenly ceased roaring, and its fiery streams stopped their course, on the procession of St. Januarius passing over the Magdalen bridge! I am told that on an occasion of this sort, an impudent lazarone danced before the image of the saint, and *challenged* Vesuvius to the trial of its power.

The damage done ten years ago was reckoned at some millions, and fourteen lives were lost. This year (1804), the misfortune has been by no means so considerable. No one has perished, and no town nor village has been destroyed. The idle Carmelites have lost a part of their income, and cannot in future drink so much wine; but that is of little consequence. Many vineyards of private individuals have been desolated;

but the whole mischief, including what the monks have suffered, amounts only to about three hundred thousand dollars.

The duke Della Torre, whom I have before mentioned, has published a somewhat tedious description of the last eruption of Vesuvius. As early as the twenty-second of May, the hermit felt three violent shocks, accompanied with a subterraneous rumbling. On the thirty-first of July, the water had visibly diminished in the wells and cisterns of the surrounding country, which circumstance is the signal of an approaching eruption. On the eleventh of August, the hermit heard Vesuvius again roar; and on the twelfth a thick black smoke rose out of the gulf. On the thirteenth this smoke was converted into a pillar of fire. Amidst a rain of black ashes and small pebbles, the duke repaired to the summit of the mountain. The rumbling in its entrails was dreadful. The bottom of the crater had risen to a great but unequal height. In the southwest a broad gap vomited lava, flames, and stones: these last all fell back into the

crater, and there formed little hills. The duke could not keep his dangerous post. He wisely retired: and concluded, from the great electricity which he had experienced by his electrometer, that this eruption would be a most terrible one; in which, however, he was deceived. He afterwards mounted still higher, and has given me a very ample description of his experiments; but as they have no interest except for naturalists, I pass them over in silence. He observed, among other things, that when the lava met a tree in its way, it encompassed it, and then streamed on further. If the tree was withered, it burnt immediately like a torch: but if it was fresh, its leaves were changed and became yellow; the twigs then turned to charcoal, and finally the trunk. Those trees (such as oaks and poplars) which had felt the heat of the lava near, bent their yellow leaves, and were overcast with a white salt dust. On the mountain itself, at the border of the crater, the vapour was so offensive and suffocating, as to take away the speech of some of the

duke's attendants, and suddenly dry up their throats: the heat too was intolerable. In this eruption it several times rained ashes over the capital, and these still continued lying on the flat roofs.

November the twenty-second, 1804.—Vesuvius has already shone for some evenings. The clouds of smoke over the mountain became redder and redder, till they at length assumed a glowing colour: then again, by the same gradation, returned to darkness; and, continuing about half a minute, resumed afresh the sanguine light. Yesterday and the day before, this spectacle did not present itself. The air has been rather cool; but to-day the enervating *sirocco* returned, and brought with it a heavy shower. Yet the mountain shewed every disposition to perfect tranquillity, and did not even smoke so thickly as before. At nine o'clock, just before supper, I was standing at the window to observe it; but as the moon was not yet up, it was not even visible. All was quiet.

But we had scarcely taken our seats,

when one of us observed a light on Vesuvius, which appeared to transform itself into a sheet of fire. We all started up, and hastened to the balcony. The brightening glow expanded every moment. The fire already spread to the declivity of the mountain. A new stream flowed out of the crater; and now the flame rolled with increasing rapidity down the steep cone of ashes, the base of which it reached in less than half an hour. Here it found a gently declining vale, where the stream appeared to stop a moment; but soon moved on again, and was impelled by its own monstrous *impetus*. In another hour it had cut through the vale: the declivity over which it now glided gave a fresh force to its current; and we pursued it with looks of amazement, till the castle Nuovo, situated obliquely opposite to my house, concealed it from our view. We hastened to the Mole, from which we hoped to have a better observation of the eruption: we saw, however, no more there; but our conjecture was confirmed, that the fiery waves had made themselves a new bed, and

that they would either retire once more to the unfortunate Torre del Greco, or fall still nearer on Resina.

The eruption was unattended by any of the preceding and usual convulsions of the mountain. The earth did not shake; the gulf did not roar; no pillars of fire ascended into the air, nor red-hot stones were emitted: the volcano merely resembled a pot boiling over; but the great extension of the lava, and its rapid streams, led us to conjecture that an immense mass would be ejected. The air was quite warm. We returned to our inn; took seats in the balcony; and eyed the hideous spectacle, which was perhaps making many thousands unhappy. The lava appeared to have paved a way for itself a little to the right, under the summit. It was clearly to be distinguished issuing from the gulf, and thus lighting the spot with an incessant glow. The pool of fire above shone bright; and a monstrous cloud of smoke arose from underneath, where it had probably collected in a cavity. Here and there pale lights glimmered in the red

flame for some minutes, which were supposed to be the houses and trees burning. On the dark side of the mountain we sometimes saw a torch which moved towards the hermitage: it was, without doubt, carried before the bold and indefatigable duke Della Torre, who on every eruption is the first on the mountain. Once a long, narrow, thick tract of cloud, settled between us and the mountain, which appeared to consist of ashes; but it soon dissipated again. The rest of the horizon was clear and star-light. At eleven the moon made its appearance, and gave a grandeur to the scene; silvering with a white fringe the red clouds of smoke on the side turned to it. On the other hand, quite a different light glimmered from the lamp in the beacon in the haven; and, to complete the variety of illumination, the low boys in the street lighted up bundles of straw in the open place which I inhabit. The carriages then rolled, as before, to the playhouses; the people passed and repassed as usual; and no man concerned himself about the burning

mountain: even a few guitars were suddenly to be heard, playing a merry tune under my window.

The effect which all this contrast had upon me, I am not able to describe. I was in a feverish agitation. I attempted in vain to sleep: I could see the volcano from my very bed; it every moment urged me to rise again. An uneasy slumber of some hours was interrupted by frightful dreams. I arose at half-past-three; and on the balcony ate my breakfast of grapes, which had perhaps grown on the spot that experienced the destruction of this fatal night.—The spectacle was the same in the morning. Oceans of flame and fire continued issuing from the gulf: sometimes I even saw red-hot stones, like fiery balls, hurled into the air; but in a sloping direction, and not high. The smoke had gathered quite down to the sea. I seated myself opposite the volcano, in order to make my observations, and pass my time till break of day; and I determined that, as soon as the first beam of light glimmered from the east, I would

throw myself into the carriage, and hasten to take a nearer view of this terrible scene.

November the twenty-third.—The distance had deluded me. I drove through Portici and Resina without observing a single trace of the horrors of the preceding night. The return of day had, in appearance, extinguished the flames of Vesuvius: both the crater, and the whole track which the lava formed, appeared only to smoke. As I approached Torre del Greco, I met with waggons full of furniture packed in disorder, and several others with wine-casks, the principal riches of these poor people. I also overtook many women and children: who had abandoned their habitations, which were threatened with destruction; and now, as the danger was over, were going again to pay a visit to the scene. The children carried chickens under their arms, the favourites whom in their distress they had not forgotten.

I drove through the town. Trade and bustle were every where to be seen, though many were occupied with packing up. The

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horrid vestiges of the former streams of lava were visible in all parts, where ten years before it had spread its desolation. At the end of the town, near the villa of the archbishop of Naples, I was desired to alight and ascend among the high walls of the vineyards. Many, impelled by a similar curiosity, had already arrived at this spot, where I found the carriages standing. I never traversed a piece of ground with greater impatience, than I did this footpath between the vineyards. The walls were so high that I could not see Vesuvius lying before me; and yet the smoke driving over, convinced me that I was very near the burning lava. I was a full quarter of an hour mounting the gentle acclivity, at the top of which a treble chain of eager spectators encircled the smoke. I hastened up to it; and stood seven or eight paces from the lava, which came rolling towards us.

To speak of taking one's station exactly before a stream of fire, and suffering it to flow up to us, sounds more terrible than it really is. The word *flow* is not proper in

application to the lava; at least, except when it is in the crater. As soon as it comes in contact with the external air, it thickens directly, and gathers a scaly case around it. The mass itself indeed continues to glow: but instead of flowing, it is only pushed slowly onwards; the crust that covers it, and its own density, preventing any stream like that of a liquid. This impulse is principally effected by the gentle declivity of the ground; which is, however, so trifling, that the eye would not discern it, if the interior motion did not occasion the crust to break, and throw its scaly fragments upon the yet-untouched ground. The lava which thus rolled towards us through the fine vineyards, was from three to four feet high: the fire, glowing like a red hot-iron, was to be seen only under the crust. It threw its dross before it, much in the manner of a billow that casts its foam onwards, and itself follows close behind. Just as I stepped up, the fire had reached a fig-tree; which crackled, and flamed up like a torch. The vineyards for the space of a

mile and a half were already converted into ashes, and the flowery earth into a sea of dross: before the lava, however, one luxurious tract still lay; the nearest vines of which, singed and curled up, inclined towards their destroyer, just as we are told some little birds are charmed into the jaws of the rattlesnake. The proprietors themselves of the vineyards hewed down as fast as possible, with many sighs, the vines they had nurtured with so much care; and tore out the stakes, in order to save at least the wood. A pretty house to the right was only three or four paces distant from the lava, yet it was thought that a full hour would elapse before the terrible slow stream would consume it. The people were still anxiously occupied in saving wine-casks out of the cellar, while the approaching fire was already heating the walls of the building. Others, whose property was already desolated, only cast melancholy looks towards the spot that had but a short time before contained their hope and support, but which now had not even a shrub to dis-

tinguish it from the surrounding devastation. The stream of lava had divided itself, as usual, into several currents, between which small elevated islands were now and then saved from the universal ruin. The breadth between the two currents that bordered the desolation, might be about two English miles. The sheet of lava before which I stood, moved somewhat slower on account of the decreased slope of the ground; but at the same time two currents to the right and the left, which had got considerably the start of the others, threatened to inclose me. This circumstance, though not so dangerous in itself as terrifying to the imagination, determined me to make a retreat of a mile on a road which was now soon to vanish for many centuries from the surface of the earth.—The lava takes its course again in a straight line to Torre del Greco, but rather higher upwards than it went ten years ago. Should it reach the road, the villa of the bishop will be the first of its objects. But I have still my doubts whether it will push itself so far, for it appears

that the rage of the volcano has subsided. It is true, fresh lava continues gushing from the abyss; yet not so abundantly as to drive forward the sheets already distant with sufficient force. These will, if no new eruption succeeds, soon gradually cool till they become firm.

November the twenty-second. My conjecture is now grown to a certainty. The lava is set firm; and since I saw it last, gained but very little ground. I beheld with astonishment the house which appeared lately on the very brink of destruction. It is not surprising that the people here believe in miracles; the apparently capricious effects of nature may easily lead to such conclusions. The lava had actually reached the house, had gathered round it in huge sheets, had closely encompassed it on three sides, and a long line of fire had extended the length of the front. The whole house was enveloped in a mantle of burning lava; and yet even the wooden door was undamaged. I stepped in, and found every thing as the fugitive proprietor

had left it. The stream had poured into a cellar lying some paces before another house, and had set on fire in a moment the beams in it which served as props for the casks. The landscape-painter Denis was just present as this happened, and assured me that the effect of this burning cellar on looking down into it had been exquisite. The lava was already perfectly cooled in this place to-day; if I would see it glowing I must ascend higher. In many places it still smoked; in some, the air over it was in a perceptible tremor. But in order to reach such a place it was necessary to cross a tract that was already hardened and cold. I did this, though not without extreme trouble; for the whole consisted of indentations and scaly fragments, which prevented a firm step any where. The sulphurous glow which struck upon me, likewise determined me on returning. I contented myself with taking a piece of lava: which was, however, so hot, that it could not be held a moment in the hand; and a quarter of an hour afterwards it was scarce-

ly warm. The poor people who were busy in tilling such parts of the ground as the rage of the volcano had not yet desolated, informed me that a hundred acres of land had been ruined already; and that the lava would certainly have flown further, if their good queen had not appeared in the afternoon to fix up an image of the Virgin very near the above-mentioned house, against a tree which they shewed me. At that instant the lava, they said, stood like a wall. The queen had moreover distributed money among the sufferers; and was accompanied by as many blessings, and as much admiration, as if she had been a saint. It was only wished that she had come sooner, to stop the stream before it had reached the vineyards.—It did not appear to me incredible that the judicious queen of Naples had complied with the humour of the people. However, I took an opportunity soon afterwards of asking her majesty whether this anecdote was true. She smiled: it had never entered her mind. "I would rather raise than degrade my people," said

she. This afforded me another proof of how little reliance is to be placed on universal report concerning persons of eminence.

Thus has this horrid spectacle reached its termination, if the warm showers now falling do not effect some new commotion; for after heavy rains the flames usually rage with redoubled vehemence, to brave as it were the sky for having emptied in a fruitless manner its heaviest clouds into the crater. The inward power of the mountain even draws in the water of all wells in the neighbourhood, and dries them up for days together. A phenomenon still more difficult to be explained is, that during every eruption the fish swarm more abundantly on the coast, and are caught so plentifully that they are never cheaper than at such a time.

I shall conclude with a remark which to me is important. I have very clearly noticed that even weak walls in the vineyards are in a capacity to hold out long against a flood of fire: that it contracts on being hemmed

in by them, and confines itself to the narrow bed prescribed to it (of ten or twenty paces); till at length the force of the masses converted from fire into rock overturns the walls, and provides itself new ways. According to this observation it appears to me incontrovertible, that at least the villages and towns situated at the foot of Vesuvius might be preserved for ever from a misfortune such as that which happened ten years ago to Torre del Greco, and eighteen hundred years ago to Herculaneum.—I would have the town on the side next the mountain surrounded with a thick high wall in a semi-circle, provided inside with strong props. The middle of this semicircle must lie the highest, and both sides sloping down; the extremities must descend on the right and left to the sea, and remain as many paces from the town as may be necessary to secure the nearest houses from the effects of the approaching fire. There is no doubt that the lava, on reaching these walls, would at first heap itself up; but soon afterwards be compelled,

by the sloping ground on both sides, to glide by the wall to the right and left, and thus take a harmless course. The wall must certainly be very thick and high: but I do not desire it to be more so than that which the Chinese have raised against the attacks of the Tartars; consequently I speak of indeed a gigantic work, but nothing impossible. I think Vesuvius is a worse enemy than the Tartars, and calls for defences equally strong against it. What the Chinese have accomplished, will not be impracticable for us. What an excellent opportunity would this afford for a king to transmit his name with blessings to the latest posterity! And he could obtain this fame much cheaper than the Chinese; for the materials lie at the hands of the workmen, the lava itself supplying the means for its own subjugation. The labourers might be taken from the crowded prisons. The tract to be built upon bears no proportion with the vast extent of the Chinese wall. A beginning might be made with only Torre del Greco and Resina, since it

appears that the lava will continue for some time to flow into the beds already formed. I even do not think it impossible to commence the wall at the very foot of the ash cone: thus including in one great semicircle all the towns lying beneath, and at the same time protecting all the vineyards situated above; as then the lava, wherever it broke out, would find but two open ways to stream to the sea. Man has so often subdued the elements, why also may he not here? The thought is great. Oh! why does it not warm every heart like mine? Why am I not a favourite at this court, where my influence might be sufficient for such a purpose? Then indeed the inhabitants of Torre del Greco should sleep in quiet, and bless my memory for thousands of years.

November the thirtieth. We have breakfasted to-day in good and cheerful company on mount Vesuvius. Three ladies even ventured up on asses, to form a nearer acquaintance with their dismal neighbour. Amidst joking and laughing, in warm and

charming weather, we reached the dwelling of the friendly hermit, and took up our station there for the present. But to give due honour to the mountain, some gentlemen were deputed up to its crater; who on their return brought the following report: On the side where the lava flows out, the mountain was split, and formed as it were a deep hollow passage. The interior sides of the mountain where it had thus parted, were remarkable for their hideous colours. Only above, near the efflux of the lava, it hangs together: so that the lava rushes down like a cataract of thirty feet high and ten broad into the new gulf; then rolls onward some paces, at one time disappearing under a cover of cold lava, and at another time breaking out afresh like the Rhone in the south of France, and running with its fiery stream into the vale. We gave full credit to the words of our narrator, who represented this spectacle as surpassing all conceptions of grandeur. The pyramid overcast with yellow sulphur is still existing in the middle of the crater, but is grown

much higher. Many lesser cones have also started up, and the whole crater seems to be filled: the appearance of its sides has changed in several places; much is cast into the gulf, and much grown thin and hollow: in short every thing evinced that the mass of fire still boiled and fermented with great vehemence. To-day, indeed, the mountain is tolerably tranquil; the flowing of the lava has stopped, the smoke is trifling, and the roaring and rumbling of the gulf has entirely ceased: but a new explosion is nevertheless still feared; for the wells in Portici gave little water yesterday, and that little was very bad. The very calmness of the mountain is also suspicious.

I must not omit in this place a laughable anecdote, to which several of my friends were eye-witnesses.—When on the twenty-second of this month the lava threatened to overwhelm the vineyards, the image of St. Januarius was carried in procession in Torre del Greco (as is often the case on such occasions), and placed before the lava; on

which the people began to kneel, and pray that the saint would be so good as to stop the progress of the flood, which however soon rolled nearer. The saint was placed a little further back; and the petitions were renewed for his favours, which would only cost him a nod or a wink. But finding all their prayers fruitless, and that the lava continued to proceed nearer, they began to abuse the unkind saint, calling him "*Vecchio ladro*" (An old rascal), "*birbone! birbante! scelerato!*" In short, they gave him every degrading appellation that indignation could dictate. This disburdening of their hearts in mere words was not sufficient: from abuse they proceeded to blows; and St. Januarius was heartily cudgelled, particularly by an old woman.

In fact, this former patron of Naples has suffered astonishingly in his credit for condescending to let his blood flow in the presence of the French; a crime which in the eyes of the Neapolitans is unpardonable. Upon that occasion they called him a jacobin, and it is even said that he was prose-

euted for the charge. In the latter case I should like very much to get a sight of the proceedings, if it were possible. Another saint, Anthony, has profited by the levity of his colleague, and has acquired in a dexterous manner the confidence of the people; so that his influence is much greater now than that of the treacherous guardian. If the latter wishes to resore his lost credit, he must embrace the moment when the volcano rages the most furiously, and suddenly reduce it to silence by his presence, as he did on a preceding occasion. By such means he would probably do the physicians a much greater favour than those inhabiting and tilling the foot of the mountain; for, according to a late learned treatise on this subject, Naples is said to be indebted for its pure and healthy climate only to the occasional eruptions of the mountain. Should it ever remain silent for any unusual number of years, it has been observed that not only many disorders would creep in, but these would take a most serious hold upon the inhabitants. This observa-

tion may be well-founded; for a monstrous quantity of electricity must be collecting in the air by the effusion of the flames from Vesuvius for weeks and months. Not a single day has passed since my arrival here, in which we have not had heat-lightning, often attended by thunder. The air we breathe is pregnant with electrical particles.

CASERTA.

THIS is the name of a royal palace, fifteen miles from Naples. It lies in the plain of Capua; which is represented as very charming, but did not appear so to me. On the contrary, I found it very tedious. It is true, that fields which in the commencement of December are smiling with the fresh green of newly-sown corn, and divided into numberless avenues by poplars and mulberry-trees interspersed with vines, afford a pretty aspect; but this appearance continuing for sixty English miles successively the same, will surely weary any eye,

however enthusiastically attached to rural scenes. It must also be acknowledged, equally tiresome to pass many miles in a road cut perfectly straight through a wood, as is the case between Narva and Jamburg. At first it is agreeable enough, but in the end it grows insupportable. Such is man: variety exhilarates the mind; and were the sky to be eternally blue, we should long for thunder-clouds.

The castle at Caserta is as large as the winter-palace at Petersburg, to which it is also of a similar form; but it is far from being finished, though it has been building for fifteen years. The crown has now many expences more pressing. The part already completed, however, is better fitted for the accommodation of the whole royal family than the palace at Naples. The stairs are the finest I have ever seen; every step is a whole piece of marble, eighteen feet long: the walls are inlaid with the grandest marble, and the cieling is finely painted. On the landing-place of the stairs lie two large lions of white marble,

who appear to strike their paws on the crown and sceptre somewhat roughly; a figure that may receive very different interpretations. The hall I should rather call an open octagon temple, the cupola of which rests on twenty-four pillars.—This building contains in fact, an astonishingly rich assemblage of the finest sorts of marble; and what heightens the value of it still more is, that they are all a native production. Apulia, Sicily, Benevento, and the country of Naples itself, have given their shares. The emperor of Russia is the only other sovereign able to erect such a palace of native marble; and it must be acknowledged that many species from Siberia or Finland are actually not inferior to the best sorts in Italy.

The colossal statue of a hero crowned by Victory, stands in the first hall. It is said to allude to the conquest of Flanders by Alexander Farnese. A naked human figure meant for Flanders is curling itself under the feet of the hero; who stands with one foot on the neck of the vanquished, and the other he has buried tolerably deep in the

belly, which produces a truly offensive spectacle.—On the other hand, it was a very good idea to decorate this hall with twelve bas-reliefs representing achievements of the Romans of which this country has been the theatre.—The paintings on the cieling are of trifling consideration throughout the castle, and the chambers are generally meanly adorned. The silk tapestry is almost every where of one colour, without any distinguished ornament of art. In the second chamber are a few landscapes representing the *Prater* at Vienna: in one the king is baiting foxes, and in another hunting wild swine. What an enjoyment is here prepared for posterity!—In the third chamber Hackert's talents have been misused for five landscapes which are unworthy of him on account of their subjects. In one, wild swine are driven through the water, and the king stands on the bridge shooting at them. In another is a similar chase with dogs. In a third the king is shooting ducks on the lake Fusaro. In the fourth he is reviewing his

troops at Gaeta; and the whole picture represents nothing but soldiers placed in ranks. In the fifth, the Neapolitan fleet is returning from Algiers; where, as is well known, it had effected nothing. This last picture is remarkable for having the representation of Vesuvius as it was in the year 1774, since which time it has greatly changed its form. The French had carried these landscapes to Paris, a plunder which could be regretted only on account of the *importance* of the subjects. A diplomatic negotiation was on this ground commenced about them, and the marquis de Gallo succeeded in procuring their restitution. The loyal citizens of Naples now repair, as before, to this spot, and feast on the exploits of their monarch.—Seven smaller landscapes, in the fourth chamber, have afforded freer scope for the genius of Hackert; for here are views of the islands of Capri, Ischia, &c. which do honour to his pencil.

A small bathing-room of the queen's is decorated with appropriate pictures; as

Venus rising out of the bath, the three Graces, and Diana fixing horns on Acteon. A malicious witling was of opinion that Acteon should have had a letter less in his name, to prevent such a misfortune in *this* place.—Three rooms for the library of the queen succeed these, and might indeed be termed halls. In the first are a number of historical and philosophical works, chiefly in the French language; neatly bound, and inclosed in handsome cases, over which are set Etruscan vases. The second room is dedicated to German literature, but contains a miserable assemblage. Not a single bad novel has appeared within the last twenty years that may not be found here. The queen is innocent of this: for she has, as she told me herself afterwards, scarcely time to read even the titles of the books; and the choice of them is left to the bookseller in Germany, who ought to be ashamed of having sent such trash to his royal customer, and the librarian no less so for his negligence in letting it have a place in a public collection that is open

to every stranger. The third hall contains a tolerable selection of books; which, after having accompanied the queen to Sicily, Triest, and Vienna, returned safely home, and were deposited here. Could books, like wine or beer, be improved by a sea voyage, this collection must surpass most others in value. This hall is beautified by charming fresco paintings.

Adjoining to this room is a little family-theatre, in which the princes and princesses sometimes amuse themselves. The decoration of an altar with inscriptions still remaining, shewed that the children had been commemorating some mirthful festival in honour of their parents. The queen is attached to her children and grandchildren with the tenderest maternal affection, such as even her enemies must admire. In another chamber, which is her favourite sitting-room, we found, besides several family-portraits, the five charming children of the emperor of Germany, excellently painted.

The greatest splendour of this palace has been lavished on the chapel. The walls, in

particular, are distinguished by the grand *giallo antico*, which the temple of Serapis has supplied.—The altar-piece (the ascension of Mary, by a painter named Bonita if I mistake not) is nothing extraordinary; but the gallery used for the pictures of the royal family contains a few others, which are truly admirable.—One, by my countryman Mengs, is the representation of Mary in the temple. A purer virgin was never beheld. She resembles a bud opening in the dawn of day, whose freshness has been untouched even by a beam of light. The colouring of the whole is perhaps a little too glaring, but I shall never forget her fascinating innocence while kneeling before the high-priest.—In the other picture, the Birth of Mary, by Conca, the colours are more softly blended; and the beam of light which, descending from the Holy Spirit, falls on the child in the lap of the lovely mother, gives the whole group a something celestial that exalts the imagination above earthly objects.—The third great picture in the gallery, the Marriage of Mary, is un-

fortunately again the performance of Bonita. It has nothing admirable, but the extraordinary modesty with which Mary offers her bridegroom the tip of her fingers.

The theatre in the castle of Caserta is built in miniature after the plan of the great theatre San Carlo. It is filled with marble and gold; but is nevertheless not gaudy, and affords an extremely agreeable appearance. The back-ground of the stage can be opened into a field, when it is intended to have great scenes or whole battles represented.

Some miles further lies Belvidere; a pretty, hunting-seat of the king's, situated on the back of a mountain. A number of small new-built houses surround the foot of the latter, where the king is said to lodge the pretty peasant-girls with whom he amuses himself. Here he spends the greater part of the year, on account of the chase; while his family lives at Portici, twenty miles distant. A wing of the castle is occupied with a very considerable silk-manufactory, the laws and regulations of which are

said to have been drawn up by the king with his own hand.—The little English park is on an insignificant scale, and very far inferior in beauty to that near Weimar. It is indebted to its climate for its beautiful southern trees: the camphor-tree is as luxuriant as any I found here.—A cataract outside of the park is much talked of, but in my opinion is not worth seeing. The mass of water is indeed not trifling, and the height from which it falls considerable; but the great effect usually resulting from these two particulars, is here lost from a want of judgment in disposing them. Even the impression which it might possibly still make, is completely destroyed by a number of bad statues, and petty bawbles. This cataract serves as a boundary of the horizon to many windows in the castle at Caserta, and is thought to be a very fine object; but at this distance it looks only like a white thread. When the king is at Belvidere, we cannot drive (as usual) to the cataract, but must go above a mile on foot. Why the king's ranger makes this matter

of so much importance, I am not able to decide: but conclude it to be of a piece with the other burdensome ceremonies imposed on the stranger; not the least of which is the being obliged to stop and bow when we have the misfortune to meet a royal child, till it has passed.

The conduit of Caserta is very famous Some are not contented with giving it an equal rank with the Roman works, but even maintain that it deserves a preference. Time alone can decide this point. It was designed with a bold hand, and is sometimes carried in three stories from mountain to mountain; but will it stand thousands of years, like those of the Romans? In fact, I must remark that the works of our time are not made even for centuries. They are perpetually out of repair; and we have now neither the same mortar nor ingenuity for building.

PORTICI.

This is the favourite residence of the royal family for the greater part of the year: probably on account of its nearness to the town, its spaciousness, or some other unknown cause; but certainly not for its beauty. The conceit of carrying the high road through the middle of the castle (so that every one going to Calabria, or even only to Torre del Greco, Pompeii, Castel al Mare, &c. must enter at one gate of the castle, and go out at the other) is so extraordinary, and so ill suited with rural stillness, that I should never fix on this bustling solitude for my recreation. The posts and other carriages are perpetually passing there, day and night: I cannot conceive how its inhabitants can sleep. Is the residence more agreeable for them when awake? I should think not.

The garden consists of a small wood of evergreen oaks, through which walks and rides are cut. These oaks have narrow

leaves, which afford in summer not sufficient shade. In the winter, on the contrary, this is very charming; for not a single leaf falls, and the ground also remains green, so that the appearance is the same as in the middle of summer: the acorns scattered around are the only memorials to remind us of the change of season. Some great spaces near the palace are encompassed with walls, and contain many thousand orange-trees glittering with their fruit. I here saw, on the twelfth of December, blossoms and fruits at the same time on the trees, wall-flowers and pinks in pots, and narcissuses and jonquils in the open beds; The air was as mild as with us in the middle of summer; the sky was clouded, and yet a great coat could not be borne. The hereditary prince has laid out a new English garden this year; which admits of more censure than commendation, particularly because the walks are much too narrow.

The castle is large: but we may save ourselves the trouble of entering, for it contains nothing worth seeing; unless we are

disposed to look at gaudy tasteless rooms, with hangings of porcelain, or some indifferent pictures by Bonita. A Rape of Proserpine by this painter would not be amiss, if the picture was not so overladen with figures that we can scarcely divest ourselves of the fear that they will not all have free respiration in so narrow a compass.---One hall is hung with six immense allegorical pictures: the execution is not bad, but the allegories are insupportable. We need have a well-informed man at hand to explain them to us; after which, however, we shall be no wiser.---In another hall, a few giants are painted as large as life, who have shewn themselves about Europe at different times. Near these we perceive the representations of a Turkish and a Tunis ambassador, with their retinue. The latter picture appears to me the best in the whole castle.---In the chapel I confidently expected to find magnificence, or at least fine pictures: but neither was there. I was disappointed in the same hope in three or four small chapels intended for the private devotions of the

royal family: there was not even a good altar-piece to be met with.---The king's chamber is crowded with bad landscapes and prospects in abundance; in which are very pretty images of the queen, made of parti-coloured wax, in bas-relief. In fact, there is no trace whatever of splendour or luxury throughout the whole building.—A few antique floors from Pompeii would, however, attract the notice of the observer who will pass through a hundred rooms to be thus gratified. At last he reaches a beautiful flight of stairs, adorned with some statues from Herculaneum that are particularly admirable for the rich folds of their drapery. Hence he is carried down to the porch, which is no less to be admired for the grand equestrian statues of the two Balbi. Every one knows that these were dug out of Herculaneum: they are in an excellent state, and appear both to be the performance of great masters. Connoisseurs prefer the statue of the son to that of the father; but I am no connoisseur, and pay my tribute of applause to both equally.

The head of the father is certainly the most expressive.

I cannot leave Portici without cautioning every stranger against the impudent extortion which will be practised upon him, particularly in the royal garden. At every door, and at every hedge, he meets with a different guide, who offers to shew the little piece of land which is entrusted to his care. He has scarcely gone a hundred paces, before he is delivered to another, and so on continually, without having seen any thing remarkable. Gardeners, under-gardeners, and gardeners' boys, play the stranger into one another's hands as fair game. One brings him a flower; another offers him a piece of fruit: all expect a compensation; and, when it is given them, are never satisfied.

FAVORITE.

This is the name of a pleasure-castle situated a little beyond Portici, the garden of which extends to the sea. It is a very agreeable country-seat, the disposition and deco-

rations of which may excite the wish of possessing it; a wish that, I can with sincerity declare, very seldom enters my mind on beholding the fine seats of the great. Favorite is, however, snug and comfortable.

The ground-floor is arranged for balls and court-festivals; but the hall for dancing runs lower than the rest, for we descend to it from two quarters by a beautiful flight of steps of white marble. It is decorated with simple busts; and lighted by a large chandelier of mountain chrystal, hanging between garlands of flowers.—Are red bricks good to dance upon? They are, indeed, varnished with oil, and of course very smooth; but notwithstanding, a boarded floor seems to me fitter. I have, however, generally made the remark that floors are no where less an object of pride than in Naples. They are almost uniformly, in the houses of the rich as well as the poor, of red bricks, which are at the utmost coated with a red oil-varnish. Wood is, indeed, not an eligible material for this

purpose here, on many accounts; it is too heating, too favourable to vermin, and too dear. But why do not the rich imitate the floors of the ancients, which they so greatly admire? those charming mosaics from Pompeii; those exquisite marble slabs from Herculaneum. Are not all the stones used by the latter still in existence?—Many rooms situated round the hall have balconies which command a view of the dancers. A large airy terrace that overlooks the sea, affords a pleasant coolness for the fatigued dancers, and has also an agreeable prospect. All the rooms are likewise richly provided with those essential articles of furniture, card-tables: the rest is far from being grand, for we must even sit on rush-bottomed chairs.

The upper story on the contrary, the *appartamento nobile* as it is termed, boasts a rich variety of the works of art that no stranger must neglect to visit. The most distinguished of these, in my opinion, are the fourteen harbours of the kingdom, painted by Hackert, which confer a mutual

honour on the painter and the subject. He has perhaps crowded his persons too thickly together, and bestowed too much labour upon them: the haven is sometimes concealed from the sight by living images. On one of these pictures, where a castle represents the foreground, he has placed as principal figures, three drummers, who are learning to drum. I should almost suppose he had done this by order; for it seems to me as if he would make game of the drummers, by planting a little girl with a little drum in the neighbourhood.—The numerous other landscapes by the same artist which we find here, may have a superior value, as works of art, to that of the harbours. They are principally charming views from Sicily, particularly round Messina; and however indifferent a person may be, as I am, to landscapes in general, yet here he will surely find a fascination for his eye.

' The next object in point of estimation after Hackert's masterly productions, and what admirers of antiquity would perhaps

place in the first rank, is the rich marble floor that adorns an oval saloon. It has been dug out of Nero's palace in the island of Capri: the feet of that imperial monster defiled this floor, which is still in excellent condition.—The curious eye will find some pleasure in looking at the silk tapestry in many apartments; which contains a very lively embroidery, and was manufactured in the king's factory at Belvidere. It is handsome and tasty. Some tables of petrified wood set in amethyst and lapis-lazuli, are also worthy of notice.

The library, not far from the king's chamber, is prettily arranged. The cases are very neatly worked, and provided with glass-doors and green silk curtains; but there is not a single book, nor ever has been.—In a closet adjoining we perceive a time-piece, the case of which is turned and carved entirely of stag's horns. It contains also a number of wild beasts, of curious workmanship; in the midst of which hangs a good likeness of the king in bas-relief.—Some very pretty fresco paintings; and a

chimney-piece of white marble, the noble figures of which are the production of a young and skilful Neapolitan artist; are worthy of admiration.

After the agreeable impressions produced by the house, the sight of the garden will occasion very different feelings. If it did not lie by the sea, it would possess no charm; for the little crooked orange-trees are every where better than here, and the vines are more picturesque in the open fields. All this might pass, if the whole garden were not crowded with tasteless little buildings, and these full of the most miserable busts and statues. It is painful every where to meet with bad statuary; but most painful certainly in this country, where the eye is spoilt for the sight of any thing but master-pieces.

RIDE TO BAIA.

On a most beautiful summer-day (but it was the tenth of December) we drove in an open carriage to Baia. On our road we saw the peas in blossom which were to be

eaten at Christmas. All the vegetables yielded the freshest green, and the golden fruits smiled through the leaves of the orange-trees.

We reached the Avern lake, which was held in abhorrence among the ancients on account of its noxious vapours. Its very name carried the character of a place where not even birds could live.* Here Homer represents the manes as coming forth at a call; but whoever approached the lake must first appease the spirits of the lower world by a sacrifice. Hannibal himself did not venture to laugh at this phantom.—The lake was surrounded by high and rugged hills; which, bordered by thick woods, shut out the air. This is now quite changed. The subterraneous fire which breathed pestilential vapours through the mouth of Avernus, is now probably extinguished: the hills, indeed, still appear; but the woods over which the statue of Calypso once shed tears, are cut down. The sight

* Ἄορνος, Avernus, *avibus carens*, birdless.

of a small restless lake underneath has nothing enticing in it; and the men and cattle pass and repass over it in safety.

In one of the surrounding rocks is the Grotto of the Sibyls, as it is called. The learned are divided in opinion whether the oracles were given here or at Cuma: it is all the same to me. We must creep in the first fifteen paces, by the light of torches: then, indeed, it becomes high enough to walk upright; but it is all so filled with water, that we can only go on men's backs, which is extremely disagreeable. In addition to this, our trouble is not repaid; for there is nothing to be seen, unless we believe the words of the cicerone, who sees much. It is supposed that the grotto once served for a more convenient road from Cuma to this side of Baia. A second entrance to it was discovered some years ago, inclining to the Lucrine lake: it remains, however, difficult to prove that it is connected with the grotto of Cuma.

On the other side of the lake lies a great ruin which most travellers, on the authority

of their cicerone, call a temple of Apollo; though not a single vestige of it is to be found in any ancient writer. The bathing-chambers lying round the main circular edifice, and a warm spring rising under one of these chambers, make it more probable that this spot contained one of the magnific nt and voluptuous baths of Baia.

We drove further up the hill which skirts the Avern lake, and reached the *Arco Felice*. This is the name of a large arch, that confines a rocky way, and resembles an old town-gate; whence it is supposed with reason to be one of the ancient gates of Cuma. —We must not neglect to climb up the narrow path of rock; not in order to contemplate the ruins above (though it is interesting enough to find a modern wine-press under the remains of a temple of Apollo), but particularly to enjoy the charming prospect which the sea with all its islands and even Gaeta on the right hand affords. Ischia appears here to be scarcely separated by a river, and we might almost count the houses of the town on the shore.

The ruins of Cuma lie much nearer, which were so renowned by the great prophetess of antiquity, who foretold the fall of Troy and the founding of Rome.—Not long since, the remains of a temple of Jupiter Stator were to be seen near the mountain of Cuma. The popular name for it was "the temple of giants;" from the colossal statue being found there which is now standing before the royal castle. There are only scattered heaps of this edifice remaining.

The famous oysters of the lake Fusaro invited us to its banks. We were ferried over to a pretty little house which the king has built by the lake for the purposes of fishing and duck-shooting. We here ate in the open air, warmed by the mildest sun. The oysters, drawn out of the water before our eyes, were very large, and had an excellent taste. After this refreshment, we hastened again to the opposite shore; and, having driven a little further, left our carriages, that we might proceed on foot down to the monstrous ruins of the baths at Baia.

The cicerone makes *temples* of them all. Accordingly we came first to "the temple of Diana," as it is called, on the left hand; properly a warm bath having a rotunda to it, the arch of which is fallen in.---On the right hand we are shewn "the temple of Mercury;" also a bath, once in the form of a rotunda, with a sky-light only. The cicerone desires strangers to whisper against the wall, that it may be heard on the opposite side; and represents this well-known effect of an elliptical arch as something admirable. —At the distance of a few paces we are conducted into a cellar; the vault of which, worked in stucco, is still entirely covered with bas-reliefs. An old woman lights a torch, and tying it to a broomstick, carries it backward and forward flaming quite close to the cieling. Different sorts of figures, indeed, are still distinguishable; as a Venus bathing, and a number of sphinxes, &c. but in a few years these will all be lost, for the smoke of the torch has already blackened them extremely.---"The temple of

Venus," also a rotunda, stands nearest to the sea, to which it has a way through it; and is striking even in its ruins.

The difficulties of climbing up and down the sea-shore were amply compensated; partly by the romantic prospect, and partly by having nothing but the ruins of Baia to contemplate. We ascended, and saw them on the right hand as far as the sea, and in the sea itself. To the left, they stood by the side of us; and our clothes sometimes touched the walls of houses which had now only sufficient left just to announce their former existence. This then was the ancient city to which a companion of Ulysses gave his name; which, for the security of its haven, the purity of its air, and the number of its warm springs, allured so many strangers and even foreigners to its walls; where the richest Romans built the most splendid seats; of which Horace sung, that no place in the world excelled it in beauty; which Seneca describes as so charming and luxurious; which Clodius reproached Cicero for inhabiting, as an unfit residence for a

philosopher; and which Propertius refused his Cynthia to visit, as dangerous to the innocence of young girls! Of all this voluptuous splendour nothing remains but rubbish and ruins: the creatures of the nineteenth century creep about them; and, while speaking of their own transitory state, act as if it were not so.

The abundance of warm springs in this country is even now very evident, for in many places the water rises in the footpath. Among all these ruins stands, on the back of a hill, a monument erected under the present government; which, to the shame of our modern architects, is in just as ruinous a state already, as Baia after three thousand years.

The road leads finally through a long narrow vault, to the baths of Nero as they are termed; properly called Tritoli, from a Greek word signifying the cure of an ague. These passages and bathing-rooms are said to have been mostly built in modern times. A man attends strangers, who strips himself of every thing but a girdle, and then,

provided with some fresh eggs and burning torches, invites those present to follow him through a narrow passage. Whoever is tempted to make the trial, will be very soon compelled by the heat to return: but the man presses forward courageously, as far as a chamber containing a water which boils his eggs in a few minutes; after which he returns dropping with sweat. This fellow earns his money fairly. I was assured that these baths are still used in the month of July for many disorders, and with great effect; which, from all I have observed, I do not doubt in the least.

We had scarcely turned our backs on the baths of Nero, when the Lucrine lake presented itself to view, the oysters of which were more renowned among the ancients than those of Fusaro are now. Hercules is said also to have raised a dam here, in order to drive his stolen oxen over it. The small remains of this dam terminated our excursion for the day; and, exhilarated by the many enjoyments which it had afforded, we returned to Naples.

Such readers as are curious to know every little particular, will find my description very incomplete. They will, of course, expect to hear about the village Baoli; which I never entered, and thereby saved myself the painful remembrance of Nero's parricide. They will wish to hear me speak of Agrippina's grave, which I have not seen; and of the *piscina mirabile*, which I have not admired. This last is a large subterraneous vault, in a good state of preservation, resting on forty-eight pillars. In ascending from Puzzoli to Solfatera, we perceive on the left hand one quite similar to this, only rather smaller; which was discovered and cleared out a short time ago. I found this sufficiently remarkable to render a tedious journey to the *piscina mirabile* unnecessary. It is the same case with the "hundred little chambers," which formerly served as a prop for the terrace that then existed. Neither did I visit the cape Misene, and the stone-heaps; of course, I have not seen the grotto of Traconara.—"But why not?" I think I

hear the provoked reader ask. What shall I answer? Want of time, inconvenience, and (to speak the whole truth) weariness, have detained me. Yes, indeed: it is impossible not to be weary of standing every step to stare at piles of stones which have lost all shape, of creeping about into gulfs and cavities where nothing is to be seen, of hearing fables and tales that signify nothing. The loquacious cicerone does not pass over a single stone: he promises the stranger every moment to shew him fine curiosities, and when we creep after him the utmost we see are dark images that busy the memory and imagination to animate the present deadness. In a word, I will now *see* no more ruins: but, if driven to an extremity, I shall *describe* in a copious manner all that I have not seen; which can be no very difficult matter, when hundreds have done it before me.

POMPEII.

A BURNING mountain is certainly a great spectacle; but nature has produced it in

many places. On the other hand, a town, a great and rich town, that, after lying eighteen centuries in a deep grave, is again shone on by the sun, and stands amidst other cities, as much a stranger as any one of its former inhabitants would be among his posterity of the present day ;---such a town has not its equal in the world. The feelings which seized me at its gate may be very faintly expressed by words, but admit indeed of no adequate representation. A melancholy, a dark and depressing horror, a stupor, a propensity to shed tears such as every one feels on hearing of any thing great and noble ; these were the sensations which I would here in part describe. There are moments in human life which have a stamp of distinction on them above all the rest : they form no part of the common chain of recollections which occupy our minds ; they ever retain their original brightness, unclouded by any of the mists and darkness of time ; they are the last objects on which the eye dwells when ready eternally to close on every thing sublunary.

Such has Pompeii afforded to me, this Epimenides of cities. What I saw there in a few hours, will often, in a calm retrospect, withdraw my mind from the world around me.

The road from Naples to Pompeii, not much above ten English miles, is an uninterrupted chain of flourishing towns; which, mocking the malignity of the volcano, cover its foot and adorn the bay. We pass Portici and Resina in our way to Torre del Greco: that unfortunate town which bears every where vestiges of hideous devastation; where the eye pursues the black stream of lava as far as the sea, and beholds in astonishment the new habitations amidst ruins that appear to serve as a fruitless warning. The elements, and human industry, have not yet levelled the lava here: its sharp spikes rise up every where, and monstrous masses of black stone formed of fire and ashes present themselves continually to our eyes. We feel our respiration freer when, leaving the heaps of dross, we see Torre dell'Annunziata, with its bustle of inhabitants passing and repassing. Thence

we proceed, between vineyards and cotton-plantations, through a smiling country formerly the bottom of the sea.

In a short time afterwards, to the left hand, amidst the hills of vineyards, the town itself breaks on our view; which, throwing off its shroud of ashes, came forth from its grave. The buildings are without roofs; which are supposed to have been destroyed by an enemy in an unguarded state, or torn off by a hurricane.—The carriage now stops. I tremblingly alight, and proceed through the gate of that Pompeii which Seneca and Tacitus once called "the famous Campanian town." Yes: at that time, when surrounded by the sea, a forest of masts stood in the now-vanished haven; trade flourished; luxury raged; buyers and sellers thronged in at this gate, which at present leads only to desert streets. My foot now steps on the same pavement as was trodden on eighteen hundred years ago: the tracks of the wheels are still visible which then rolled over it. An elevated path runs by the side of the houses, for

foot-passengers; and, that they might in rainy weather pass commodiously over to the opposite side, large flat stones, three of which take up the width of the road, were laid at a distance from each other. As the carriages, in order to avoid these stones, were obliged to use the intermediate spaces, the tracks of the wheels are there most visible. The whole pavement is in good condition: it consists merely of considerable pieces of lava; which, however, are not cut (as at present) into squares, and may have been on that account the more durable.

This is supposed to have been the main street of Pompeii: which, however I very much doubt; for the houses on both sides, with the exception of some few, were evidently the habitations of common citizens, and were small and provided with booths. The street itself too is narrow; two carriages only could go abreast: it is also very uncertain whether it ran through the whole town; for from the spot where the moderns discontinued digging, to that where

they recommenced (and where the same street is supposed to be found again), a wide tract is covered with vineyards, which may very well occupy the place of the most splendid streets and markets still concealed underneath. But without wishing to investigate what the envious bosom of the ashes still conceals, let us dwell for a time on what lies before us: and eternal be the memory of the vintner who, as he was about to plant trees fifty years ago, gave, by the first stroke of his spade into the earth, the signal for the resurrection of a town!

We will stay a moment before this booth in which liquors were sold. We feel disposed to call for the master of the house: he appears only to be absent for a time on business, perhaps to fill his casks again which stood in these niches; for the marble table bears the very marks of the cups left by the drinkers who are just departed. Is no one coming? Well then, we will go into the next house.—The tenant here has had a salutation of black stone inlaid in his threshhold: we are

therefore welcome, and may without hesitation satisfy our curiosity. On entering the habitations, we are struck at the first glance with the strangeness of their construction. The middle of the house forms a square something like the cross-passages of a cloister, often surrounded by pillars; cleanly, and paved with party-coloured pretty mosaic. In the middle is a cooling well; and on both sides are little chambers, about ten or twelve feet square but high, and painted a fine red or yellow. The floor is of mosaic; and the door is made generally to serve as a window, there being but one apartment which receives light through a thick blue glass. Many of these rooms are supposed to have been bed-chambers, because there is an elevated broad step on which the bed may have stood, and some of the pictures appear most appropriate to a sleeping-room. Others are supposed to have been dressing-rooms, because on the walls a Venus is being decorated by the Graces, and all sorts of little flasks and boxes were found in them. The larger

served for dining-rooms, and in some suitable accommodations for cold and hot baths are to be met with.

The manner in which a whole room might be perfectly heated, was what particularly struck me. Against the usual wall, a second was erected standing a little distance from the first. For this purpose large square tiles were taken, having like our tiles a sort of hook, so that they kept the first wall as it were off from them: a hollow space was thus left all round, from the top to the bottom, into which pipes were introduced that carried the warmth into the chamber, and rendered the whole place one stove as it were.—The ancients were also attentive to avoid the vapour or smell from their lamps. In some houses there is a nich made in the wall for the lamp, with a little chimney in the form of a funnel, through which the steam ascended.—Opposite to the house-door we see the largest room; which is properly a sort of hall, for it has only three walls, being quite open in the fore-part. Perhaps this was

the place where the good woman sat at her work, surrounded by her children; enjoying the coolness of the well before her, and welcoming all the guests who entered. The side rooms have no connection with each other: they are all divided off like the cells of monks, the door of each leading to a well.

Most of the houses consist of one such square, surrounded by rooms. In a few, some decayed steps seem to have led to an upper story, which is no longer in existence. Some habitations, however, probably of the richer and more fashionable, were far more spacious. In these a first court is often connected with a second, and even with a third, by passages: in other respects their arrangements pretty generally resemble the rest.---Many garlands of flowers and vine-branches, and many handsome pictures, are still to be seen on the walls. It was formerly permitted for the guides to sprinkle these pictures with fresh water in the presence of travellers, and thus revive their former splendour for a

moment: but this is now strictly forbidden; and indeed not without reason, since the frequent watering might at length totally rot away the wall.

Over one of the house-doors a Priapus or *phallus* is carved, the signification of which is a matter of doubt and speculation. Some imagine it to have been the habitation of a woman of pleasure: others consider it as an emblem of the god of gardens, under whose patronage fruits were perhaps sold in this street. But for that it appears too narrow. It is more certain that another of these houses belonged to a statuary, for we find his workshop still full of the vestiges of his art. A third was probably inhabited by a surgeon, whose profession is equally evident from the instruments discovered in his chamber.

A large country-house near the gate undoubtedly belonged to a very wealthy man, and would in fact still invite inhabitants within its walls. It is very extensive, stands against a hill, and has many stories. Its finely decorated rooms are unusually

spacious; and its terraces airy, from which we look down into a pretty garden that has been now again planted with flowers. In the middle of this garden is a large fish-pond, and near that an ascent from which on two sides six pillars descend. This is usually called an arbour; but I know not why, for it has not the smallest resemblance to one. The hinder pillars are the highest, the middle somewhat lower, and the front the lowest: they appear therefore to have propped a sloping roof. A covered passage resting on pillars incloses the garden on three sides: it was painted, and served probably in rainy weather as an agreeable walk. It has a fine arched cellar underneath. It receives air and light by several openings from without; and consequently its air is so perfectly pure that in the hottest summer it is always refreshing, and agreeable for a ramble.—A number of *amphoræ*, or large wine-pitchers, are to be seen here, which are still leaning against the wall as the butler left them when he fetched up the last goblet of wine for his

master. Had the inhabitants of Pompeii preserved these vessels with stoppers, wine might have been still found in them; but, as it was, the stream of ashes rushing in has of course forced out the wine, and the king of Naples is thus deprived of the pleasure of drinking that delicious liquor eighteen hundred years old. Instead of this we found more than twenty human skeletons, of fugitives who once thought to save themselves here under ground, and certainly experienced a tenfold more cruel death than those suffered who were in the open air.

Ah! when we wander through the desert streets and houses, the question every moment recurs, What became of all these inhabitants? who appear to be just gone away for a moment only, leaving every thing lying or standing about as they had used it. Their destiny was dreadful. No stream of fire encompassed their abodes: they could then have sought refuge in flight. No earthquake swallowed them up: they would then have endured nothing of

the pangs of death, from the sudden suffocation. *A rain of ashes buried them alive* BY DEGREES! Read the delineation of Pliny: "A darkness suddenly overspread the country; not like the darkness of a moonless night, but like that of a closed room in which the light is on a sudden extinguished. Women screamed, children moaned, men cried. Here, children were anxiously calling their parents; and there, parents were seeking their children, or husbands their wives: all recognized each other only by their cries. The former lamented their own destiny, and the latter that of those the dearest to them. Many wished for death, from the fear of dying. Many called on the Gods for assistance: others despaired of the existence of the Gods, and thought this the last eternal night of the world. Actual dangers were magnified by unreal terrors. The earth continued to shake; and men, half-distracted, to reel about, exaggerating their own and others' fears by terrifying predictions."

This is the dreadful but true picture

TAYLOR OXFORD

which Pliny gives us of the horrors of those who were, however, far from the extremity of the misery. But what must have been the feelings of the Pompeians, when the roaring of the mountain and the quaking of the earth waked them from their first sleep? They attempted also to escape the wrath of the Gods; and, seizing the most valuable things they could lay their hands upon in the darkness and confusion, to seek their safety in flight. In this street, and before the house that is marked with the friendly salutation on its threshhold, seven skeletons were found: the first carried a lamp, and the rest had still between the bones of their fingers something that they wished to save. On a sudden they were overtaken by the storm that descended from heaven, and sunk into the grave thus made for them. Before the above-mentioned country-house was still a male skeleton standing with a dish in his hand; and as on his finger he wore one of those rings that were allowed to be worn only by Roman knights, he is supposed to

have been the master of the house, who had just opened the back garden-gate with the intent of flying, when the shower overwhelmed him. Several skeletons were found in the very posture in which they had breathed their last, without being forced by the agonies of death to drop the things which they had in their hands.—This leads me to conjecture that the thick mass of ashes must have come down all at once in such immense quantities as instantly to cover them. I cannot otherwise imagine how the fugitives could all have been fixed, as it were by a charm, in their position; and in this manner their destiny was the less hideous, for death suddenly converted them into motionless statues, and thus was stripped of all the horrors with which the fears of the sufferers had clothed him in imagination. But what then must have been the pitiable condition of those who had taken refuge in the buildings and cellars? Buried in the thickest darkness, they were secluded from every thing but lingering torment; and who can paint to himself with-

out shuddering, a slow dissolution approaching, amidst all the agonies of body and of mind? The soul recoils from the contemplation of such images.

We have visited the inhabitants in their private houses: I now conduct the reader to the public edifices.—The temple of Isis is yet standing here, with its Doric pillars. On these altars victims were offered, and from these white marble steps flowed the blood of the sacrifices. From that vault issued the voice of the oracle. The walls of this place were painted with emblems of the service of Isis; the hippopotamus, the cocoa-blossom, the ibis, &c. We still found here the sacred vessels, lamps, and tables, of Isis. From a little chapel still existing, a poisonous vapour is said to have arisen formerly, which the heathen priests may have used for every species of deception. Seneca makes mention of it in his time; and after the violent eruption of Vesuvius, this vapour is said to have increased: but I did not observe the slightest smell.

A small Grecian temple of which only

two pillars remain, had been probably already destroyed by an earthquake which in the reign of Titus preceded the dreadful eruption of the volcano.—On the opposite side of this temple there is still an edifice named the quarter of the soldiers, because all sorts of armory-pictures of soldiers, and a skeleton in chains, were found there. Others considered it to be the forum of Pompeii.

Two theatres are in an excellent state of preservation; particularly the smaller one, which might be fitted up for representation at very little expence. The structure of it is such as was usually adopted by the ancients, but is unfortunately out of date with us. Whoever has seen the theatre of the Hermitage at Petersburg, in the emperor Paul's time, and figures it to himself uncovered and without boxes, has a true image of the theatre at Pompeii. I cannot conceive why this mode of building is not usual in the present day. The spectators require commodious seats, a free view of the stage, and facility of hearing, as

much now as ever. All this is obtained in none of our modern theatres to such perfection as here. I have gone over the little theatre at Pompeii entirely from top to bottom, and seated myself in different places, but have never had occasion to complain of any one as not affording a good view. Though it is large enough to hold two thousand persons, yet the rabble standing in a broad gallery at the very top were just as able to see all that was passing on the stage as the magistrate in his marble balcony. In this gallery the arrangements for spreading the sail-cloth over the house were still visible.---The stage itself is very broad, as it has no side walls; and appears less deep than it really is. A wall runs across it, and cuts off just as much room as is necessary for the accommodation of the performers. But this wall has three very broad doors; the middle one is distinguished by its height, and the space behind it is still deeper than before. If these doors, as I conjecture, always stood open, the stage was in fact large, and af-

forded moreover the advantage of being able to display a double scenery: if, for example, the scene in front was that of a street, there might be behind a free prospect into the open field. I should very much like to see a piece performed in such a theatre.

A walk through a town that was itself but lately under ground, cannot be finished at a better place than the graves of the inhabitants. These are before the gate on the high-road. The tomb of the priestess Mammea is here very remarkable; which, according to the inscription, was erected here by virtue of a decree of the decemvirs. I shall not speak, indeed, of the little boxes in square piles of stones, in the midst of which stood the urns on a sort of altar surrounded by the urns of the family in niches; nor of the hideous broken masks which are still affixed on the outside of this pile: but I shall never forget the beautiful seat which forms a semicircle before the grave by the road-side, and will hold twenty or thirty persons. It was probably

overshadowed by trees eighteen hundred years ago; under which the female peasants of Pompeii sat in the cool evenings while their children played before them, and viewed the foot-passengers and travellers who were passing through the gate. Here I also sat, wearied both by mental and corporeal exertions, and surveyed once more with pensive looks the corpse of Pompeii. What a throng of people once swarmed in this place, all actuated by their necessities and passions! and now, how dreary and desolate! My eyes grew moist at the affecting scene, as I walked along the ruins; and reflections on our transitory condition drew tears from me on leaving them.

The smallest part of the city only is dug out, more than two-thirds of it still remaining under the ashes. One single street, and part of a narrow bye street, are the only passable quarters. On going through the house on the right to the opposite ones, we come to a wall of ashes from which pieces of buildings every where project, and appear to supplicate the removal of their bur-

den. But little or no progress is now made in digging. The queen has lately (as it is said, at the instigation of the prince of Wirtemberg) ordered the work to be continued, and I actually found twenty men employed at it. But what is the labour of twenty men here! It is objected, that the damage occasioned by the destruction of the vineyard above would be too great; but the value of such a vineyard is little in comparison with the treasures which it conceals. It is objected also, that it is difficult to dispose of the earth that is dug out. These are all flimsy pretexts to conceal the want of inclination. Thirty or forty thousand idle lazaroni are begging and starving in the streets of Naples; and all the prisons are filled with galley-slaves, who (inconceivable as it may be) are used for no purpose whatever. These are hands enough, and at a trifling expence; for the latter would not be paid at all, and the former would work for very low wages. Severe measures might be adopted against the beggars, who in that case would have a good

opportunity of earning their subsistence in an honest way; and thus Pompeii would still be the benefactor of Naples.

The French, during their stay here, dug out some pretty houses: and prince Leopold has also had some others uncovered at his own expence; for every prince and princess will have the honour of contributing his or her part to the work, that it may be related to foreigners visiting the court. The buildings which have been brought to light within these few months have fine marble fountains, with borders of the same material; and in the chambers are found handsome pictures, in a tolerably good state of preservation, the signification of which will occupy the antiquarians.---On one stands a naked female figure, holding up a veil behind her. Opposite to her sits a youth, in whose lap two long spears lie inverted, and a star is hovering over his head. Between the two stands a winged boy with a burning torch. The cicerone is instantly ready with his explanation. "That," said he, "is Venus, Apollo, and Love." He might as well

have named a dozen other gods, or demi-gods, and I should have been just as wise.---The second is still more enigmatical: A naked man is standing, with the arms of a pretty female figure (veiled) very familiarly thrown round him. Both appear to contemplate a dragon very tranquilly. A spear descends through the air, directed not against the dragon, but against them; and behind the young man is a sword leaning against an eminence. The cicerone was here too not at a loss for a reply: he had fully acquired the art of these people; in answering something, let it be what it will: for silence is not allowable among them.---On the third picture a Hercules is very clearly to be distinguished, but the rest is much damaged.---Some pretty arabesks are also to be met with in these new chambers.

The view of Pompeii is even now truly impressive; but how much more so would it have been if the king had left the statues, household furniture, holy utensils, &c. standing in the places where they were dis-

covered while digging! Even the skeletons might have been left standing and lying, and what they held in their hands should not have been taken from them. The form of the old roofs had been clearly imprinted in the mass of ashes: this form might have been imitated, and such roofs have been replaced. What would have been the sensations of the stranger on viewing the utensils for the sacrifices still on the altars, the household furniture in the apartments, the half-drest victuals in the kitchens, the flasks of oil and ointment in the baths, and the busy skeletons each at his occupation! He would have thought himself in a city inhabited by departed spirits; and, absorbed in awful contemplations of the past, would have left Pompeii as the frontiers of the lower world.

It is urged that this was not possible; because every thing would have been stolen in a few weeks that could have been removed. But what is the use of the soldiers, who do very little else than dance at the opera? How easy it would have been to

erect guard-houses at the gates of Pompeii! and with one or two companies of invalids all the passages might be conveniently secured. They might then have saved themselves the trouble of dragging to Palermo all the antiquities as they were dug out. I will venture to say that the French would not have plundered a nail out of Pompeii itself, but would have respected every thing in it as the property of the skeletons.

HERCULANEUM.

No traveller should be induced to descend deep in the ground for Herculaneum. The money which he must give his cicerone he may as well throw into the street; for his curiosity will be only wearied with a perpetual sameness in every cellar. Great preparations are made; torches lighted up, a burning wax taper given into every one's hand, after which we descend an incalculable number of steps. We hear the carriages rolling in the street over us, like dis-

tant thunder; and what do we see remarkable? Immense masses of lava, which once buried the city. For all the rest we must take the word of the guide. We are dragged up and down through all sorts of damp cold passages, that resemble subterraneous labyrinths, and are totally without air.—These walls are said to have belonged to the theatre. A small specimen of the marble is still to be seen. Those stairs lead down into the pit; here the unfortunate inhabitants sat witnessing the performance while Vesuvius was brooding their destruction. We gape at the wall and the stairs, nod our approbation to the cicerone, remain as wise as before, and are at length heartily glad to get out of this cellar and see the day-light. Formerly this passage was very rich in curiosities; temples, theatres, pictures, statues, &c. were then in abundance to be admired: but now almost the whole is again closed, for want of room to dispose of the lava taken out at present; and there is, properly speaking, nothing to see. The mag-

nificent works of art which have been brought to light, are, in one assemblage, to be found in the

MUSEUM AT PORTICI.

UNFORTUNATELY, much the smaller part only is still there: for whatever was supposed to have any superior value from its materials or construction, was sent to Palermo; where it rests in fifty-two chests till the burning *French* lava is a little cooled.

Yet this remaining part has, however, its full value. Who can behold without the strongest emotions of admiration, the relics of the most transitory things, which, for eighteen hundred years, have braved the ravages of time? There are still bread, corn, dough which was just to be put into the oven, soap with which they had washed themselves, figs, and even egg-shells perfectly white, and in as good a state as if the cook had broken them an hour before. Here is a kitchen provided with every thing necessary: trivets and pots stand on the

hearth; stewpans hang on the wall; skimmers and tongs in the corner; a metal mortar rests on the shaft of a pillar; weights, hammers, scythes, and other utensils of husbandry; helms and arms; sacrificing bowls and knives; a number of pretty-shaped glasses, large and small glass bottles, lamps, vases, decorations for furniture, a piece of cloth, nets, and even shoe-soles; all sorts of female ornaments, necklaces, rings, and earrings; a wooden chess-board, reduced indeed to a cinder:—all these things are more or less injured by the fire, but yet all distinguishable at first sight.---Every apartment of the museum is laid with the most charming antique floors; partly mosaic from Pompeii, and partly marble from Herculaneum. Statues, vases, busts, chandeliers, altars, tables of marble and bronze, are all in as good a state as if they had just come from the hands of the artist. Thousands of coins fill the different cases. On short fine chains hang medallions of marble down from the cieling, in the same manner as our chandeliers or birdcages do.

These medallions have on both sides bas-reliefs, which appear to be of no considerable value as works of art. They hang so as to be reached with the hand, and of course may be conveniently turned about and examined. I cannot decide upon the effect which such ornaments may have had formerly. As all that were found were crowded into one room, and thus formed a cluster hanging from the cieling, the whole appearance of them was very bad.

Most of the pictures in Herculaneum, Pompeii, and Stabia, were sawed from the wall; and a long row of apartments in the museum is now set out with them. I cannot say that a very careful selection of them has been made: many of them are almost obliterated, and many are extremely bad. It appears as if the object had been to fill a great number of rooms, without paying any regard to the tediousness of such a scene for the spectator, who perhaps would not wish to look at more than a twentieth part of the whole. They have carried their puerile conceit so

far as, with infinite difficulty, to loosen the scratches made by the soldiers at Pompeii in their barracks, and to adorn a large apartment with them.—All that took up too much room has been placed in the court; which is crowded with tombstones, inscriptions, cisterns, pillars, statues, &c. In the middle, a fine horse of bronze is set up. The modern inscription informs us that there were four, but only this one has been saved. It would have been wiser not to have said any thing; for the other three were hacked to pieces through the negligence of the government in not using proper measures for their preservation, but at last they thought proper to secure the fourth.

The most remarkable objects in the museum at Portici, are the manuscripts found in two chambers of a house at Herculaneum. Though they have been so frequently described, they must be seen to furnish a correct idea of them. They resemble cudgels reduced to the state of a cinder, and in part petrified; are black and chesnut-brown;

lie in many glass cases; and unfortunately are so decayed, that under every one of them a quantity of dust and crumbs is to be perceived. Being rolled up together in the manner of the ancients, and perhaps also gradually damaged by the moisture penetrating through the ashes, it appears almost impracticable ever to decypher a syllable of them. But for the industry and talent of man nothing is impossible, and his curiosity impels him to the most ingenious inventions.

The machine by which the manuscripts are unrolled, is of such a nature that I despair of describing it clearly. It resembles, yet only in the exterior, a bookbinder's frame on which he usually sews his books. The manuscript rests on some cotton in the bow of two ribbands; with one end fastened above in cords, exactly like the curtain of a theatre. Goldbeater's-skin is then laid on with the white of an egg in very small stripes, by means of a pencil, in order to give something to hold by. To this skin silk threads are fastened; which, together

with the ribband, wind above round the peg, in the same manner as the string of a violin. When the workman has, with the skin, laid hold of however small a part of the manuscript; and, by means of a sharp pencil, has loosened the first leaf as much as possible; he turns the peg with the greatest precaution, and is happy if he succeeds so far as to unroll a quarter of an inch: upon which he begins the operation afresh. It must not, however, be imagined that this quarter of an inch, which was undone with such infinite difficulty, remains a connected whole. Not at all: it rather resembles a piece of tinder that is full of holes.

After the workman has gained thus much of the flimsy leaf, he carries it, with his breath held in, to a table, and gives it to the copyists. These men must be very expert in distinguishing the letters. Their task is not only transcribing, but drawing: for they copy the whole leaf, with all its vacancies, in the carefullest manner; after which a man of learning tries to supply the parts that are wanting. These supplements

are, of course, very arbitrary. There is scarcely a line in which some letters or words are not wanting; often whole lines, or whole periods, must be filled up. What a wide field for conjecture! What is thus supplied is written in red ink, between the black; we may therefore instantly perceive at first sight, how much belongs to the original, and how much has been added. It is said that the manuscripts are also to be printed: in that case I anticipate how the linguists of Europe will employ themselves in cavilling, each in his way, at the supplies which have been thus made, or substituting others in their room.

The endless trouble which the whole must occasion, may be conceived. It was some time ago nearly laid aside, as every thing else is here; but the prince of Wales has taken it upon himself, and defrays the expences without giving offence to the royal sportsman of Naples. Eleven young persons unfold the manuscripts, two others copy them, and a meritorious and zealous Englishman named Hayter has the di-

rection of the whole. He assured me that the persons employed began to work with greater skill and expedition than some years ago. He by no means despairs of decyphering all the six hundred manuscripts still extant; and does not doubt of finding a Menander and an Ennius, as he flatters himself with having already found a Polybius, in his work. The very day before I visited the museum, he had discovered an unknown author, named Colotos.*

His business requires a philosophical temper. As the name of the author is always put on the last page, he cannot know whose work it is till that leaf is unrolled. Seven Latin authors have fallen into Mr. Hayter's hands; but unfortunately all in such a state that it was not possible to open them whole. He complained the more of this, as there appeared to be among them a work of Livy's; at least, it was certainly an historical work written in his style, and be-

* Κωλωτος

gan with a speech in which much was said of a family of Acilius. Unfortunately, no more could be made of it. Mr. Hayter lamented that the first person to whom the manuscripts had been entrusted (a Spaniard named Albuquerque) had thrown them all together; for he himself thought that they might have been of various merit in the different chambers in which they were placed.

At present five writers have been discovered: Philodemus, of whom the most works have been found, and among others a treatise on the vices which border on virtues—certainly a very copious subject if it has been discussed with ability; Epicurus; Phædrus; Demetrius Phalereus; and now Colotos. Mr. Hayter is not perfectly satisfied with finding nothing but philosophical works; yet he says that even in these many historical notices yet unknown are interspersed. There is, for example, a treatise on anger, containing an instance in which Bacchus punished Cadmus for indulging that passion; a circumstance of

which we were never before informed. All travellers interested for the sciences, will catch (as I did) with eagerness every word from the mouth of the meritorious Hayter, and join with me in wishing him health. He is fully possessed of every other requisite qualification.

In a fresh conversation with Mr. Hayter, I have learnt that the manuscript of Colotos lately found contains a refutation of Plato's treatise on friendship. Mr. Hayter has also traced the name of Colotos in Plutarch; who has written against him, as he has against Plato. Thus it was the same with the ancient philosophers as with those of our times.

A new and important discovery has been made within these few days. The writings of Epicurus have hitherto been found only in detached parts, but now they have been met with all together. This manuscript is in the best state of preservation, and Hayter will now be able to rectify his own former supplements by the original. It must be extremely interesting for an intelligent

man, to be able to ascertain in such a case whether he has properly supplied the sense. —A hundred and thirty manuscripts are either actually unrolled, or unrolling.

CHURCHES AT NAPLES.

THE churches themselves, as edifices, are here seldom worth looking at. They are mostly very small; and not likely, by their construction, to immortalize the architects. But there is scarcely one that does not contain something curious, and for that reason I shall notice them cursorily. I shall not detain myself with indifferent pictures, but speak merely of those that are distinguished for their beauty or absurdity.

Santa Maria Soledad. A Spanish officer has here founded a convent of nuns for the education of the poor orphan daughters of officers. I should like to have learnt how far his will was accomplished, but the old nuns refuse admittance.—In their church St. Cecilia plays on the organ, and an angel takes the trouble to blow the bellows for

her. This was the droll conceit of Caravatica.

Santa Brigada boasts a cupola charmingly painted by Luke Giordano. It represents, what we very frequently find in this country, an assembly of heavenly beings rendering honour to the Almighty. The saints look at him, and the angels play on all sorts of instruments. But the effect of the whole is so admirable, that we can never be weary of surveying it; and the longer we gaze at it, the more lively the objects appear. Round the lower part of the cupola runs a gallery painted in a similar manner, in which the evangelists are standing and enjoying the prospect. Giordano, who lies buried here, has in this cupola erected himself a finer monument than if the most pompous inscription had been fixed on his tomb.

Santa Trinita is the most splendid church in Naples, but this is all that can be said for it. A prodigious quantity of marble is lavished on it; but the pictures which it contains are of no great value,

though some of Spagnoletti are among the number.---I must observe once for all, that the treasures in silver and precious stones formerly to be found here and in many other churches, will henceforth be sought for in vain. They have all been *secularized.*

The church of *Spirito Santo* is said to be connected with an hospital for loose women; but all hospitals here lie buried in the most nauseous filth, and I have neglected visiting these receptacles in which human beings moulder away.---A rosary picture by Luca Fa Presto (here I may venture to call the good Giordano by his nickname) is very much celebrated. I prefer, however, looking at a fresco painting of his; for rosary pictures are in general contrary to my taste.---On the other hand, I will introduce the reader to an acquaintance with a new painter of whom he will probably now hear for the first time. His name is Fidelio Fischetti. He has produced a large and charming picture, from which a truly celestial Virgin sends a smile. The heads of the saints and angels are

masterly, the whole group is admirable, and the colouring lively. The figures indeed appear all to stand forth too little in front. We observe also with pleasure that the child Jesus has a great likeness to his lovely mother.—In a chapel hangs a very good picture representing a silly subject. The queen of heaven is armed with a cudgel, and has just been beating Satan severely. On the other side, a boy of about fourteen stretches out his hands to her. His distorted eyes declare him to be epileptic, and consequently to have been possessed by the devil.—In a good fresco painting, the sorcerer Simon is hurled down from the air. In the excellent head of St. Peter, the joy of success is expressed in a very lively manner: the pious painter has almost overdone his part here, by making the saint express a malicious joy.—A splendid inscription in marble informs us that here rest the bones of I know not how many thousand martyrs. Among them are not less than ten kings, emperors, empresses, and princesses; from England,

Scotland, Dalmatia, &c. The curious collector has also not forgotten to notice from what church-yards and out of what catacombs he gathered these bones.---Not far from this lie three round smooth marble stones, each having a few holes; to which, according to tradition, the martyrs were bound to be tortured. The lips of the pious kiss these stones smoother every day.

The chapel of *Maria della Pieta de Sangri* is in reality only a family vault belonging to the house of Sangri.---This chapel has been renowned for many curious productions of art in marble, particularly for a statue of Bashfulness as it is called. It is a very beautiful female figure, concealed from head to foot in a veil that is in all parts thin and transparent, and which sits so close to the face and body as to allow every feature and limb to be clearly distinguished. Volkmann thinks the conceit new, but not fine. I, on the contrary consider it as fine, but not new; and have no other objection to it than the absurdity of calling a figure more naked than a Pa-

risian opera-dancer, the image of *Bashfulness*. Even the concealment of the charms is only sufficient to heighten them. The sculptor's name is Corradini; and an inscription over the statue compares it to the performances of Grecian artists.—Another singular statue is distinguished by a title no less curious; namely, "the disappointed delusion." A man is lying in a net which with the body is very ingeniously wrought out of one piece. A Genius who by his attributes is intended to denote Reason, has opened the net before the person entangled, and begins to disengage him from it. These allegories are such strange affairs, that they must be very simple and clear in order to afford amusement.---A dead Christ over whom a veil appears in like manner to have been thrown, is a manifest imitation of the statue of Bashfulness.---But how was it possible for Volkmann to pass over in silence the magnificent bas-relief of white marble over the altar? It is, in my opinion, the best piece in the whole chapel. The figures are as large as life. The body of Christ

surrounded by his friends, who all express their grief at his death, is exceedingly natural and affecting. A weeping group of angels are hovering in the air; and in so beautiful a manner are they executed, as to draw tears also into the eyes of the spectator. The whole is very charming, but it has however one fault; namely, that Christ does not appear dead, but merely asleep.—A prince Sangro who died thirty years ago, was a jack-of-all-trades, and was every moment bringing forward some new invention. At one time he painted in wax colours; at another, he made artificial lapis-lazuli; at a third, wool from dog's-bane: he took from, and gave colours to, genuine stones; smoothed porcelain by a wheel; tinned copper vessels more durably than usual; restored plants from their own ashes; constructed inextinguishable lamps, &c. Among other things, he knew how to give to white Carian marble any colour which he pleased, and indeed penetrated the whole stone with it. Of this last art he has left a memorial in the chapel; for his own tomb

appears to be made of porphyry. We must not, however, view it attentively; as we may very soon discover that it is coloured, and cannot then refrain from the remark that its natural white would have been more handsome. Whether the numerous inventions of this prince have perished with him, I have not been able to learn. In his lifetime, at least, they must have made him very happy; for never is a vain man more so than when he thinks to have acquired by his own genius what no one possessed before him.

San Lorenzo is said to contain many remarkable statues and pictures; but I saw nothing there worth noticing except a Christ on the cross in a red silk sleeping-gown.

San Girolamo boasts twelve magnificent pillars from the temple of Jupiter Serapis.* Unfortunately, the church is so disfigured with gaudy marble, that the beautifully simple pillars stand there like serious men

* I cannot pronounce this to be certain. The pillars at least *deserved* to have stood there.

playing among boys. A picture in the sacristry is ascribed to Guido.---There are many other pictures in this church, but of little value. In one chapel we see an old man who appears to welcome a youth by an embrace. I am much inclined to think this picture fine, and am fond of mentioning things which are passed over by others merely because no famous name has recommended them.

San Gennaro (or Januarius) is the cathedral church. A few small porphyry pillars at the entrance are said to have come from a temple of Apollo, but are scarcely worth looking at. The baptismal font is an antique sacrificing-vessel of Bacchus, and is adorned with clubs and masks. It is a pity only that the ears and noses of the latter have been struck off. All wine-merchants are said to have their children baptized in this vessel.---I have read with astonishment in Volkmann, that the altar-pieces by Dominichino are not his best performances. He does not take the trouble to say a word further upon the sub-

ject; but proceeds to mention how many golden cups set with diamonds were found in the treasury of this church, and how it is supposed that the liquefaction of the saint's blood is effected. I confess that the Resurrection by that artist made a stronger impression on me than all these treasures. The first waking of the dead man, the anxious surprize with which he casts his eyes around, the tender fearless joy with which his wife embraces him, and the expression of dread and horror in the persons who were less closely connected with him, all denote refined feeling with masterly powers, and produce an astonishing effect on the heart.—The picture hanging opposite, where several sick people are miraculously cured, is admirable; but there should not have been a lame hand among them, which is indeed no subject for the arts.---The subterraneous chapel is not worth visiting. The cardinal Caraffa is here kneeling in marble. If it be true that Michael Angelo executed this statue, he has at least certainly not confirmed his reputation by it.

San Giacomo. When distant from our country, we are delighted with every trifle that puts us in mind of it. Here, where we so seldom find German spoken or written, I felt a very agreeable sensation excited by an inscription in that language on a tomb that suddenly and unexpectedly meets the eye. It records the memory of a brave German knight who faithfully served the emperor Charles the Fifth as counsellor and soldier; and lived as long as the emperor's son had immediate occasion for him, for he died on the day on which peace was concluded. The inscription runs as follows, in the simple style of the old Germans: "Hans Walther of Hiernhaim was my name. I lived a knight in honour and credit. I was the emperor Charles's counsellor and colonel, and his son Philip's also. I served him with my arms faithfully, and brought my six thousand men into his country," &c.---The monument of the viceroy Peter of Toledo, is a more striking object to the eye. It was he who crowned all his exploits by erecting the giant in

the court of the castle. The monument itself is a gaudy tasteless composition of statues and bas-reliefs, prepared by John of Nolta. On the latter most of the figures have crooked legs: among the former there is a very pretty representation of Justice holding her indispensable scales (which however are money-scales) in one hand, and in the other *a judge's wig*.---The old man who led me about had an idea that nothing would interest a stranger which was not antique; and accordingly, when he saw me looking steadfastly at a Birth of Christ by Spagnoletti, he declared it to be four hundred years old.—A Holy Family carefully covered with a silk curtain, is given out as the work of Guido; but I had already learnt not to be deluded at Naples by either names or curtains.

San Fillippo. I recal this church to mind only to laugh, first at the image of St. Jauuarius there treasured up, which remained once unhurt by a fire in consequence of a wink from the saint, who had before been pleased in the same manner to check the rage of Vesuvius; and secondly at a droll

and ambiguous epitaph of a certain Peter Leo who had been confessor to the convent of nuns: "*in cura virginum cœnobii diligentissimi.*"

Santa Maria Nuova. Whoever thinks the inventor of the art of mining as practised at sieges worthy a visit, may here see his tomb. His name was Peter Navarro: he raised himself from a common soldier to be general of the Spanish army. It is, however, not certain whether the diabolical invention can be ascribed to him; for the inscription merely says that he was skilful *in expugnandis urbibus,* "in reducing towns."—The best picture in this church represents a very horrid subject: an executioner plucking the bowels out of the body of some martyr, whose name I have forgotten. I have also seen a similar piece in another church: where, however, the painter's imagination has exhibited a *sublimer* idea; for there the bowels were wound round a roller, that might be turned so as to draw them out of the saint's body as ladies twine off cotton.

Santa Chiara is a cloister of nuns, filled

by princesses and countesses, who give and receive visits, and live merrily, among themselves. The present abbess is a princess, who feeds a fair flock of above two hundred sheep. Their church is one of the largest and finest in Naples. The cieling, by Conca, representing David dancing before the ark, is finely painted.—An interesting picture, with an affecting inscription, is dedicated to a girl of fourteen, who is lamented by her parents as an only daughter, and by her destined bridegroom. She lies here hewn in stone; and if the figure is just, she must have been a lovely creature.

An antique tomb stands in the chapel of the family of *San Felice*. It has little merit as a work of art, but the subject it is intended to represent would not be unworthy the labour of an antiquarian to decypher.—The same remark applies to a pulpit which, according to tradition, was sent over from Jerusalem together with two serpentine pillars, as a present to the pious sisterhood. It is decorated with very bad but very curious bas-

reliefs, which represent men cut into pieces and kings looking on, &c. The pulpit itself has a truly primitive aspect.—In this chapel the family of Bauci have an old monument, remarkable for the costume of seven knights lying in it. Not only does each bear in his hand his falcon, but several hold in their other hand a falcon's claw, and have besides a falcon's wing on their girdle. The Bauci must surely have descended in a direct line from the mighty sportsman Nimrod himself.—The monument of a marshal Cabarro is also said to be here: who, at the instigation of queen Johanna, was an accomplice in the murder of her husband; and for this action was afterwards, by her order, deservedly punished with death by the executioner. But I did not see this monument, nor could the monk who was my conductor give me any information respecting it. The memorial which reads so striking a lesson ought surely to be preserved with care.

San Dominico. I recommend the sacristy to all supercilious princes, as a fit

place for them to visit occasionally; for here they will behold corruption preying on the bodies of their equals. In the gallery running round stand large coffins covered with red velvet, in which kings and some heroes of royal blood are mouldering.—The Annunciation by Titian, and a St. Joseph by Giordano, do not add to the credit of those masters.—Seeing a silk curtain hang over an altar, I thought it concealed some precious picture, and desired it to be removed. The guide told me that could not be done unless the altar were first lighted up. As it was here pretty dark, I thought he wished to shew me the object by a stronger light, and begged him therefore to bring the tapers. He did so, bent his knee, and crossed his breast. This raised my curiosity to the highest pitch. He then removed the curtain; when there stood before me a wretched wooden doll, as a figure of the holy Virgin, dressed in brocade; which here performs miracles daily. I suppressed my propensity to laughter with the greatest difficulty, and even affect-

ed a reverential look. From this I acquired one caution, which I recommend to every traveller; namely, on seeing a curtain, to inquire whether a picture is behind it: for the master-pieces of superstition are here as much veiled as those of the arts.

San Paolo was formerly a temple of Castor and Pollux, of whom two pillars are still remaining. Volkmann saw many other antique pillars, from a theatre on which Nero is said to have danced. These I have not been able to find. Seneca often passed this place, to visit the philosophical auditory; and was grieved to find the theatre fuller than the school. This vexation was in my opinion very unphilosophical: they must be an insupportable people who could act otherwise.

San Giovanni Evangelista. Perhaps the smallest and yet the most remarkable church in Naples; for it was built above two hundred years ago by a philosopher named Pontanus, who has decorated the church-wall on the outside with philoso-

phical proverbs that savour little of the blind superstition prevalent in his time.—Pontanus has here inscribed some highly affecting epitaphs to his beloved wife and children, whom he had the misfortune to survive; but they would produce a still greater effect if they were a little shorter.—In another place he has indulged himself in an ingenious piece of humour. He once found a fragment of a marble slab, with half an antique inscription; which he directly set about completing, and then made it serve as an excellent epitaph for one of his friends.—This church is also not without a relic; but it is a genuine philosophical one. This is no other than an arm of the historian Livy.

The Church of the Holy Ghost. Before the time of St. Dominicus, garlands were commonly woven of roses, which were placed on the heads of lovers; and these gave a charming perfume. But the monkish imagination, which models every thing in its own strange way (like the marquis who

had all sorts of monsters hewn in stone, to decorate his palace with them) has plucked the simple garland from the brows, and converted *roses* into little balls, to which is hung a cross, still giving these the appellation of *rosaries*. When the hands of the pious are provided with these, the fingers receive a power, by playing with the little balls, of playing away their sins. It is one of the maddest conceptions that ever entered the brain of a man; I would say, of a monk. But, what is still worse, it passed into the heads of a thousand others; and now millions of fingers are tossing these little balls up and down, and imagine at the same time that they thus actually toss their sins aside. To what a degree may not human credulity be imposed upon! Whoever would see the sublimest powers and the lowest degradation of the human mind, let him place Newton discovering the powers of gravitation, by the side of an old woman telling her beads.—In this church, which belongs to the Dominicans, hangs a picture by Luke Giordano, which is none

of his best performances, for how could the subject inspire a painter? The queen of heaven is sitting in a corner, and distributing rosaries. The child Jesus in her lap does the same; and the holy crowd, kneeling, receive them with pious gratitude.—By way of indemnification for the time lost in contemplating this absurdity, let the spectator raise his eyes to the cieling; in which the Baptism of Christ, excellently painted by Matthias, is to be seen. Matthias would have left a very agreeable impression on the spectators of his picture, if he had not thought proper to intersperse it with some horrid scenes. On the left hand David is shewing the head of Goliah; and, on the right, Judith that of Holofernes.

THE GIANT.

A MUTILATED and originally ill-hewn figure of Jupiter Terminus was dug up somewhere, and repaired by a still worse artist than its first maker. It is a huge shapeless mass, of which the most remarkable cir-

cumstance is that it has been placed in the open court near the royal castle. New arms have been put on this giant. In his present place, however, he has no occasion for them; for his monstrous limbs serve no other purpose than to hold in each hand a small coat of arms. What a burlesque composition! From the belly down to the foot an eagle's skin is spread over him, and on this stands a pompous description in a style very prevalent among the Italians, which declares to posterity that some viceroy (it is not worth while to copy the name), after having done the town many great favours, crowned his exploits by erecting this giant here, and converting it from a fabulous being into the guardian genius of *the best of kings*. What king is here meant, is perfectly a mystery: all kings are *the best* while living.—The people play all sorts of tricks with this giant.

THE LIGHT-HOUSE.

As every traveller, if he only stops some weeks here, will certainly walk more than once in the haven, let him by no means spare the trouble of mounting the steep flight of stairs in the light-house. Let him, in fine weather, also take his coffee there. An old friendly pilot will set out a chair and table for him, in the gallery which goes round the lantern; and, if he has a short sight, will bring him also a telescope: and thus provided he may feast perfectly at his ease, on the most magnificent panorama that was ever reflected to a human eye. The splendid city lies like an amphitheatre around him, crowned by the Carthusian monastery which commands Fort St. Elmo. To the right and left the bay extends itself to view; the winding bank of which is bordered by gay edifices, like a robe embroidered with flowers. On one side Pausilippus lifts its head, and on the other Portici, with which latter the smoking Vesuvius is

connected. The eye, wandering from thence, reaches Castel al Mare, and the Cape of Minerva. Under the feet of the spectator, at a giddy depth, the people throng on the Mole, and the rocking ships move their forest of masts in the ocean. Innumerable boats are sailing backward and forward to the English ships of war lying off in the roads. As we follow the course of the boats, our looks glide by an irresistible attraction over the majestic surface of the ocean; and, passing sideways, rest on the adjoining island of Capri, which rises out of the waves. Whoever does not here, for some minutes at least, forget the whole world over this small spot of land, is probably blind.

THE VILLA REALE.

This is a public walk which may certainly be compared to the avenue of lime-trees at Berlin, but by no means to the summer-garden of Petersburg, and still less to the Tuilleries at Paris. If it had not the sea on one side, and the famous Farnese steer

in its middle, it would be scarcely worth mentioning; for a few scanty trees, and meagre courtiers parading among them, are the only ornaments its contains.

VIRGIL'S TOMB.

After ascending a paved mountain with some difficulty, and an unpaved footpath with still more, on reaching a cool nook in a rock we find ourselves at the entrance of a cave which internally forms a regular arched square. Round about are small niches hewn in the rock, where the urns stood; and whoever has seen the grave of the priestess at Pompeii, will not doubt a moment that all this cave has been a burial-place. But why that of Virgil? This I am not competent to answer. The number of niches evinces much rather that it was, as at Pompeii, a family-vault. But Virgil was a native of Mantua, and had no family at Naples; we may therefore conclude that it is a delusion if we here imagine ourselves in the cave that held the remains of the great

Roman bard. It unfortunately also does not appear that travellers of any rank or condition visiting this place, are inspired with particularly sublime emotions; for the first thing they do is to forget Virgil completely, and scratch their own names on the wall. We might enlist whole regiments here from all nations. It is shocking to think of what thousands the good Virgil must thus drag with him into eternity.

Opposite the entrance of the cave is a marble table fastened in the rock, on which we may read an insignificant inscription that has been often copied. The spaces between the lines are filled with the names of travellers. Here stands the name of Gustavus the Third of Sweden; but written only with lead pencil, and so much effaced that we must believe it on the word of the cicerone. Here is also seen that of the late sir William Hamilton; which a Frenchman, in the ardour of his zeal for liberty, would have erased with his sabre amidst loud imprecations. Sir Sidney Smith's name too is here; whom the French hero would have

spared less, if the English hero had not been close behind him. I found likewise the name of the Russian Orpheus, the organist Himmel. Many ladies have forgotten here that they should engrave their names in hearts, and not on stones.

I have seen very little of the laurels which are said to sprout, unplanted and indestructible, from Virgil's tomb. Laurel-trees are to be found indeed every where in this part, but poetical sprigs scarcely any where.

THE POST-OFFICE AT NAPLES.

As we go from the place Largo del Castello to the Mole, we must pass a corner where the lists of the letters arrived are hung out. As the throng of people is there at all times very considerable, it gives rise to some singularities which in my opinion are confined to Naples. The letters are numbered, and the names of those to whom they are addressed are marked alphabetically, but these are the christian and not the surnames. This does not, however, ap-

ply to all without exception; for whoever has the good fortune to be a prince will have a place apart, marked by the letter P.

Many who cannot read come also to inquire if there are letters addressed to them. A shrewd fellow has converted the ignorance of these into a source of emolument. He stands there with a packet of blank papers in his hand: the person who wants his assistance approaches him, and giving him a farthing or two, mentions his own name. The other casts a glance immediately over the list, and when he finds the name there, he does no more than write on a piece of paper the number under which it stands: this he gives to the inquirer; who hastens with it to the post-office, and receives his letter without ceremony: whether the receiver be right or not, is no matter of concern, if he will but pay the postage.

The letters of foreigners are not put on the list, but are thrown in a heap in the post-office. When a person of that description inquires for a letter, they direct him to the heap; which he turns over till he finds it, or is satisfied there is none for him. But

if he chooses, he may take one not addressed to him, provided he pays the postage, which is the only evidence required of its being his property. It may easily be imagined that disorders must necessarily arise from such a want of all arrangement. Every foreigner will do well to have his letters addressed to a banker.

But to return to the corner I before mentioned. The man who marks down the numbers is not the only one who has found a source of profit there, though indeed he collects his receipts with the most ease and convenience. There are half-a-dozen small tables in the street; and as many men sitting before them, with physiognomies as worn out as their coats. They hold pens in their hands, and a folded letter-case lies before them. They need only dip their pens in the ink-stands near them, and they are ready to write letters of any conceivable purport to every quarter of the habitable globe. A second chair opposite to theirs, invites the needy letter-sender to sit down, and communicate his thoughts to one who will give them the polish of good diction.

Here we see an old woman; there an honest sailor; in a third place a warlike hero; and in the fourth a brisk lass: they have sons and mothers, and all sorts of concerns of the heart, far and near, in the Old and the New world.—The old mother, for example, takes a seat (a scene that I have myself witnessed) opposite to the first writer, who had lost his nose (which is no uncommon thing here). He immediately puts his pen to paper: the date he had already written beforehand on the edge of the sheet, in order now to lose no time. He was right, for the good old dame is a little prolix. Her only son was roving about the world; and she wished him much to return, for she felt her latter end approaching. She affords proofs of her sickly condition by frequent coughing, which interrupts the torrent of words; and the shower of tears that frequently gushes down betrays the emotions of her mind. What I have comprehended in a short space, costs the poor old woman a multitude of words; which all imply the same thing, for she was in want of nothing

less than expressions, her tongue appearing to be the healthiest part about her. The man listened patiently to her, digested her copious flow of thoughts with the greatest rapidity, and committed them with no less expedition to paper. The old woman put on a pair of spectacles, and followed every stroke of the writer's pen with strict attention. She often spoke in the mean time; recalling what she had forgotten, and making such amplifications as she found requisite. The gentleman of the quill paid no regard to her; but having fathomed the spirit of the intended letter, wound it up with expedition, not letting his pen drop till he had brought himself through the labyrinth of conceptions to the close of the epistle. He then read it over to the old woman; who nodded approbation, and let a smile steal through her wrinkles. The dextrous penman presented her with the instrument for subscription; which, however, she declined at this time *for various reasons*. He then desired her to spell her name, which he wrote; and closing the letter with a wafer,

put upon it the name and address of her son, and delivered it to the tottering old dame. She laid hold of the paper that expressed her wishes but not her ardour, with her left hand, and directed her right to her pocket; which, after much apparent trouble, at length reluctantly opened, and afforded a copper coin, which she gave to the writer, who had long stretched out his hand to receive it. She then hobbled with the letter to the post-office; and he quickly folded another sheet, unknowing and unconcerned whether he next should have to express the overflowings of a joyful or an afflicted heart.

All this correspondence is commonly conducted in such a loud and public manner, that the post-office has no occasion to break open the letters: it need only dispatch a few idle persons with good ears among the populace. Soldiers and sailors proclaim their affairs to the world without hesitation: their gesticulations while dictating are none of the gentlest, and they often beat with vehemence on the table of the writer.—It

might, indeed, be more difficult for a listener to catch the sensations of a bashful maid. I have seen some of this description also sitting and dictating, and I will venture to affirm that the letters were to the constant or inconstant ones who had stolen their hearts: but I have no other proof of this than the unintelligible whispering, the down-cast looks, the varied colour of the cheeks, on her side; and the friendly glances of the secretary.

These men of genius have, however, not erected their pulpits in the street for only the dispatch of letters, but also to decypher such as arrive for those who cannot read. On the day when the post comes in, a different scene is exhibited from that which we have just enjoyed. All pens are at rest: the lips only are in motion; and, as may be easily conceived, there is another interesting supply for the curious observer. The fixed attention with which the hearer hangs on the lips of the reader; the varying passions, the accomplished or defeated hopes, of the former; are well contrasted with the

perfect indifference of the latter, and the unchanged voice with which he proclaims both joyful and melancholy news. Such various scenes are to be witnessed no where but in the open street.—A friend of mine was once present upon a droll occasion of this kind. A sailor received a letter which he appeared to have waited for with the greatest impatience, and carried eagerly to the reader. The latter unfolded the paper, and commenced with the greatest unconcern the following billet, while the rejoiced sailor appeared ready to seize the words out of his mouth: "A greater rascal than you I never saw." It may be easily imagined how the looks of the gaping sailor were in an instant changed. He had no inclination to hear a continuance of the letter in the presence of a laughing crowd; but snatched it out of the hand of the reader, and crept away uttering imprecations.

We daily meet with these street-pulpits, surrounded with more or less bustle; and it is a characteristic of the Italians in which

they distinguish themselves from the French, that they display their ignorance without hesitation. The common French are just as little able to read as the Italians, but they never can be brought to acknowledge this to others. The Frenchman is vain and ignorant; the Italian ignorant only.

CARTHUSIAN MONASTERY.

NAPLES resembles an amphitheatre lying on the sea-shore; and the fine Carthusian convent of San Martino, rising above almost every street, may be compared to an observatory that commands the view of this amphitheatre. The castle St. Elmo stands behind it a little higher; bearing the convent as it were, in its bosom. Its threatening cannons appear to be planted only for the protection of the disciples of St. Bruno.

These monks were formerly in a very thriving condition, but they are now not quite so prosperous. They possessed silver plate to the amount of millions. "Did the French take all this?" said I to a Carthu-

sian monk. "First the king, and then the French," answered he. They had among other things a large silver cross with bas-reliefs by a skilful artist named Anthony Faenza. This has also been sent to the mint; but the good fathers have had the figure of it painted as a memorial, and now with sighs shew it in effigy.

They would have been happy if they had lost only their silver furniture. But they possessed great estates which pleased the king: the unquiet and expensive times afforded a pretext; he seized on these, and gave the monks permission to go where they pleased. As, however, there were many among them who from old age were scarcely able to crawl, the royal favour saved them from starving by a pension (if I mistake not) of a hundred and fifty Neapolitan ducats, about 30*l.*, with which they can scarcely be said to live: before, they had an income of a hundred and fifty thousand ducats. As the Jesuits were lately going to be restored, it was thought wrong to recall one order that had been formally

dissolved by a pope, and endow them with rich estates, while another order which had never been dissolved was pining in unmerited exile. The Carthusians were accordingly recalled and put into possession again of their monastery, but not of their estates; for part of these had long been sold, and part were still bringing in a considerable yearly sum. Such of the Carthusians as had in better times saved something, petitioned the king for permission to repurchase the estates for themselves. They did not indeed intimate that they could do this with their own treasures, but pretended to have the assistance of some friends for the purpose. The king granted their request with pleasure; for they were the only purchasers from whom he could, in case of need, take back his own bargain, and dispose of it a second or even a third time. They are, therefore, now far from being as rich as formerly, but they are still wealthy.

It would indeed afford the most striking contrast for the inhabitants of such a residence to be obliged to live on a miserable

pension. It is impossible to conceive any thing more beautiful. The cloisters, resting on marble columns, inclose a very wide open space fit to adorn a royal palace. The charming well in the middle of the court is surrounded by a garden, the four divisions of which are encircled with box-trees; but one of these serves for a burial-place, and is closed in by railing, the top of which is ornamented with death's-heads in white marble.---The grounds are extensive and cleanly. A charming garden divided into terraces forms a semicircle round a hill having a fine turret, and trees glittering with fruit. Order and cleanliness prevail within and without.

The white dress of the monks affords a friendly aspect, but they themselves are still more friendly. They receive strangers with the utmost good-nature and cordiality. No one must combine with the name of Carthusian the usual representation of rigid anchorets, who do nothing but prepare their graves, and never utter a syllable but

their *memento mori*. The Carthusians of San Martino are not so gloomy: they smile and laugh; they inhabit very handsome apartments, of which many have three, very neatly furnished; they sleep under coverlets, look down from their balconies through telescopes on the crowds of Naples, and entertain strangers with coffee: in short, I confess that, for an old man who has survived all his dearest relatives, and has nothing more to expect from the world, there cannot be conceived a better retreat than the convent of the Carthusians.

I visited, among others, an aged monk in his cell, a brother of the duke of Serra Capriola, the Neapolitan ambassador at Petersburg; and have seldom seen a man who appeared more cheerful and satisfied. Besides three pretty chambers, he had a little yard with a well, a kitchen of his own, &c.; and before his rooms a very spacious covered gallery for walking, that commands a charming prospect. Here he raised hyacinths and other flowers in pots, and

thus sweetened the last days of his life. This man will surely one day slumber gently under his own flowers.

The monks are now altogether fifty-two in number; mostly hoary sages, but with some few young men among them. One of the latter, who conducted us about, appeared to be scarcely twenty-five, though he assured us that he had been in the cloister ten years. He had a very agreeable intelligent physiognomy, a little inclined to melancholy. I felt an involuntary interest in his favour, and thought I read in his features evident traces of unhappiness. I was, however, soon undeceived; when, on entering his cell, I found many books, but not a single rational one among them. They consisted merely of legends, and similar superstitions.

In the refectory I found a number of clean cloths laid. Before every plate stood three pewter cans; the largest of which, indeed, held only water, but in the middle one there was a complete bottle of wine, and in the smallest half a bottle of

a superior sort. With this portion at every meal a moderate drinker may be not only satisfied but merry.---"You have not shewn the gentleman the best part," said another Carthusian, with a roguish countenance, and nothing of the monk about him but his cowl. By "the best part" he meant the kitchen; and indeed a true picture it was, well worth the trouble of visiting. It was very spacious; with a well standing in the middle, and a Triton blowing his horn. The greatest cleanliness was every where maintained. The copper utensils, tinned and brightly scoured, hung against the walls.---Close by was the bakehouse, in the middle of which was a large marble table used for making pies and cakes. The victuals for the ensuing supper stood already divided into portions. It consisted of sallad, set out very nicely but not very plentiful. The jovial monk assured me they should have some fish to it.

Their apothecary's-shop is as well arranged as their kitchen. The old monk who presides over it is said to possess great

medical knowledge, and knows how to make up many a nostrum.—I also found there a hoary shrivelled Carthusian who could not be much less than a hundred years old. He sat holding a cat in his lap, and appeared to take an interest in nothing else. I wished him perhaps the best thing in his situation—that he might not have the misfortune to survive his cat.

The church is magnificent, but a little too gaudy. It is almost overwhelmed with gold, marble, and pictures. Its greatest ornament is the Birth of Christ, by Guido; a very charming picture, but which is generally censured as deficient in the finishing. The monks themselves say that the child is unfinished, but I look upon this as a parrot declaration. It seems to me that Guido has only sketched Christ on purpose, in order to distinguish him from the mere earthly beings by a sort of celestial transparency. Had he painted the infant completely as usual, he would have made him a stout clumsy lad, and not a heavenly child. But it is the very essence of a critic,

always to look for painting, and not poetry, in a picture; to study the body only, and not the soul. Guido is said to have left this painting in its present state in order to escape the envy of the Neapolitan painters. How little is the mind of an artist known by those who suppose that the envy of others could lead him to make his labours less perfect than usual! The reverse is the case. —In the sacristry hangs the best picture I have ever seen by Spagnoletti: the subject, indeed, is not the best chosen; a body of Christ in St. John's arms, over which the mother is weeping, and a Magdalen kissing the feet. The execution, however, is beautiful.---There are besides, both here and in the church, a number of pictures by good or at least famous masters; but I have no inclination to give a catalogue of them. For that reason I hasten into the priory, which is decorated with beautiful pictures, and none but such as are of a superior kind.

A St. Lucia here by Guido, is indeed rather fat; but yet a fine and lovely woman,

with eyes of a mild voluptuousness. Whoever does not know her history, will wonder why she is carrying another pair of eyes on a plate; as those which she has in her head appear to be perfectly sufficient to enchant a mortal. The incident is in fact so singular, that it may well deserve a place here. A beautiful youth was in love with this saint, and she was not disinclined to him. She had made the greatest impression on him by her intelligent eyes, but unfortunately he perceived only an earthly paradise in them. This he told her so often, and probably with so much warmth, that the pretty saint, far from being provoked at his boldness, at length plainly felt that her sanctity was in great danger. On this she suddenly took, in an heroic hour, the detestable resolution of removing those lures which threatened the chastity of her lover and perhaps her own. She accordingly tore out her beautiful eyes; and laying them on a clean plate, covered them with another, and sent the delicious present to the youth. History does not mention what

effect this sight had on him, but only the manner in which she was rewarded for her heroic deed. Our Saviour is said to have given her, on the spot, a new pair of sparkling eyes, quite as beautiful as her former ones. Whether she did any mischief with these, is not known.---I fancy I now hear some bestowing on her equal praises with the Roman Lucretia. That a lady should kill herself to avoid the reflection of her own shame, is nothing very extraordinary. But that she should rob herself, amidst the most dreadful agonies, of her beauty, merely to avoid what others so diligently seek (namely, the production of sensual impressions), is a pitch of heroism which no female heathen, and perhaps scarcely any other Christian, has attained.

A charming Madonna also hangs in the priory, but the monks could not tell me by what painter.—In a chamber we see a small picture over the door, which is the renowned Crucifixion by Michael Angelo. A story is told of the artist's having had a man crucified, in order to be able to make a

faithful master-piece. Had he in reality been capable of such an absurd barbarity, he should have taken a man straightly formed; for his Christ is evidently hump-backed. I care not if the whole body of artists cry out, "Do you not see that the dying person has distorted himself?" I maintain that the Christ is humpbacked; for I can distinguish the convulsions of death from a natural deformity.---In a corner stands a picture which has not any value as a work of art, but is remarkable from the occasion which produced it. A dreadful plague once desolated Naples, and drove away all the inhabitants who could seek safety in flight. Above a hundred persons resorted to the Carthusians, from a confidence in the purity of the air there. The good monks received as many as they could find room for; and then prudently shut their gates, and discontinued all communication with the city. After some time the tedium which always exists in a cloister, seized also these temporary inhabitants.

Among them was a painter, whose name I have forgotten; who passed his time in an agreeable manner, by drawing all the persons in the cloister, and grouping them together in the attitude of prayer. He has posted the Plague at the gate, threatening with great violence to force an entrance, but receiving a modest repulse from St. Bruno. The picture has at present an historical interest; and, as long as any of the persons saved were living, must have been to them an affecting memorial.

The prospect from the rooms of the priory must not be neglected by the traveller. Of the country around I say nothing, for it must be seen to be felt. The view of the town, lying like a model under our feet, is unparallelled. We see the people, like dwarfs, hurrying along and crowding together: the hollow murmur of many hundred voices concentrated in one breeze, is clearly to be distinguished on the terraces. —The library is said to possess a treasure of Greek manuscripts. I have not seen

them; and, to judge by the figures of their possessors, they probably lie deep in the dust.

Farewel, ye friendly monks! You fulfil at least one wish of your Creator, by being cheerful: may you never be otherwise! May old age among you ever be satisfied with flowers, and youth with legends; the head cook with not dividing the portions too small, and the butler with not leaving the pewter flasks unfilled!

THE PALACE VILLA FRANCA.

We must procure a royal permission for visiting this palace: but it is worth the trouble, and this indulgence is never refused on the application of a foreign minister. Besides the collection of pictures, the palace contains nothing remarkable; but this is sufficient.

The collection is admirable, but not numerous. Its capital piece is the Madonna by Raphael. She is a charming and delightful creature; but is not of a superior order of

beiugs, and demands no admiration.---The same cannot be said of another Madonna, by Andrea del Sarto; which combines beauty and innocence with an exalted aspect. Her I must venerate, admire, and adore: I dare not presume to love her. But this Madonna does not appear quite free from maternal weakness; for why does she suffer the child Jesus in her lap to quarrel with the little John about an apple? This is ill-suited to the future character of Christ, especially as John is represented as a boy of the lower class.---Another child Jesus, whom a Madonna by Tintoretto is holding in her lap, is indeed a wonderfully beautiful boy, but he discovers no marks of his heavenly origin: he is merely a handsome infant of this world, notwithstanding the chain of angels which (a droll conceit) surrounds the head of the mother instead of a sacred glory. She has probably just finished her morning orisons, for she has a prayer-book in her hand. What comical ideas can a painter's head couple together!

But enough of the Madonnas; of whom,

as every where else, a great number are to be found. Let us turn to the roguish Cupid by Schidone. Take care: he appears indeed to rest; but the penetrating eye, the finger on his mouth, all denote that he is certainly planning some mischievous trick.

I never saw a collection so abounding in pictures by Schidone. He was generally an excellent painter, and always a poetical one. It was reserved for him to represent as much of the Massacre of the Innocents as ought to be exhibited on canvas: not the bleeding children. Not the convulsions of the mothers, nor the brutal rage of the executioners: Schidone has painted a soldier relating in confidence to many mothers who are surrounded by their children, the misery that awaits them. Charming idea! an excellent head only could have imagined it. The terror, the anguish of the mothers, in contrast with the tranquillity of the slumbering and the playing children, afford an ample and glorious scope for the true genius. It is a pity that Schidone's style of

execution was not equally fine with the conception.

The Magdalen by Titian is the truest Magdalen I have ever seen. She does not lie, as usual; for why should repentance choose that posture? She is standing; with her eyes full of tears, directed to heaven. Those tears which flow so affectingly down her cheeks are not the tears of grief, but of the deepest and sincerest penitence. Most artists who have treated this subject, always represent their Magdalen, though gnashing her teeth, as a fine blooming girl: frequently she looks sickly and pale; yet that complexion is not the effect of her past life, but resembles more the paleness of a love-sick girl. Titian, on the contrary, bestows beauty on his Magdalen; and indeed an exalted beauty, for he has even disdained the little aid of a sickly aspect: but the first glance on this beauty declares it to have been abused, and these symptoms are such as mark the genius of the painter.

If we wish to recover from the painful

impression which this picture makes on the mind, we must turn towards the Laughing Boys, by Parmeggianino. They laugh so heartily, that the pedagogue at Weimar who was my teacher in the third class, and was certainly the gravest man I ever saw, would have had his scholastic features somewhat discomposed at seeing them.—Or we may place ourselves before the Silenus of Spagnoletti; who, with his jolly drunkenness, surrounded by the most comical countenances of the Fauns, will produce the same effect.

A change of sentiments will again be occasioned by viewing the master-piece of Albert Durer: Christ on the Cross, surrounded by those who loved him. What heads! What expressive grief! How beautifully are the corporeal sufferings mingled with those of the soul in the head of Christ! How visible, on the contrary, is it, that the bystanders suffer the latter torments only! I willingly pardon the little angels who are fluttering about with cups in their hands, and busy in catching up every drop of

blood that flows from the wounds of the Saviour.—I imagine this picture to have been bespoken, and indeed as an *ex voto*, by a noble family; for on the left hand a father is kneeling with his two sons behind him, and on the right a mother with her two daughters, all capital heads. Over them are the arms of the family; and what justifies my conjecture is, that Satan, in his hideous form, is striving to prevent the good lady from praying. She had probably had frequent similar combats; and in order to release herself from them, she vowed this beautiful picture. If this is the case, Satan deserves our thanks; for, according to the old proverb, we should "give the devil his due."

A painting by an artist named Lippi, contains heads almost as beautiful as those of Durer. The infant Christ, however, resembles much a spoilt child.—By an excellent painting as large as life, Raphael has bestowed immortality on an obscure and probably bad poet. The name of Theobaldino would otherwise never have escaped oblivion.—A picture of Beneficence by a

master whose name has unfortunately escaped me, excites tender and agreeable sensations. The charming old man who is helped up the steps, the mother lying and stretching out the hand of her child to receive charity, and the boy who archly lays his hands on the head of the lamb, are all pretty and natural.—Much more so than the Night of Caracci, flying through the air and carrying two sleeping children in her arms. It looks as if a lady had stolen two children from a cradle. His pencil also appears not of the softest kind.—The figure of Christopher Columbus, excellently painted by Titian, completely answers the idea we form to ourselves of that great man.—Two old heads by Rembrandt and Rubens, which hang close together, and appear to struggle for the prize of excellence; a female portrait by Spilberg; a male one by Vandyke; and a head of Christ by Correggio, bearing the crown of thorns; shall conclude my catalogue.

These are the masterly productions with which I furnished my memory. I have de-

scribed them as I usually do; not according to technical rules, but by my own feelings. Whoever requires more, let him examine books of study.

Young painters are allowed to take copies here, and they profit by this permission very diligently. A small stock of miniature pictures are always on sale. They are mostly good copies of the best pieces, and may be bought for some ducats.

Cleanliness is as little observed in this palace as every where else in Italy. Before the first door, the goats appear to have their stable. There is not even, at any entrance, a scraper for the shoes.

CAPO DI MONTE.

This is a royal castle, situated on a lofty mountain, to which we climb with great difficulty. In order to take a survey of its scanty treasures, we must procure an express permission, the trouble of which is hardly repaid.

The entrance to this seat of the muses,

like the rest of Naples, is almost stopped up with dirt and filth. The place is well fitted for bodily exercise; as we find here a vast number of chambers, and space sufficient to contain all the masterpieces in the world. The walls are also hung with pictures, but certainly not with any thing like a superior performance. The king of Naples seems here to have been disposed to found a gallery of trash, and in that he has succeeded. It is true, twelve of the best pictures have been shipped to Palermo; but if they were here, it is possible we might not find five of them to our taste. All that remain are, generally speaking, too wretched to claim even our indulgence. A few dozen only of pictures, scarcely sufficient in number to decorate a cabinet, are worth mentioning or praising.

A Holy Family by Schidone is beautiful, particularly Joseph. Many other pictures by Schidone have a place here; his weakest productions, however, seem to have been selected. A great number of angels (the chief designs of Correggio, which he after-

wards executed in the dome at Parma) may certainly be fine when every head, which is very expressive, is considered apart; but not one of them designates an *angel's* head. They are mere schoolboys.—As a production of the art, a St. Sebastian by Schidone is admirable on account of the inimitably fine *foreshortening*. His sisters are drawing the arrows out of his body. Poor Schidone! must you then display all your powers on a man that is spiked?—A portrait of Raphael's mother, painted by himself, is very bad; probably a school essay. I was, however, much pleased at looking on it, for I fancied to myself the joy of the good mother on viewing this first specimen of her son's talent.

Many portraits by Titian, and miniatures, serve here and there as some compensation for the miserable daubs in other parts. A little sleeping Christ by Guido would be enchanting, if the crown of thorns and instruments of martyrdom were not lying at his feet. I turn with pleasure to the sleeping Cupid of Parmeggianino, whom the wan-

ton Genii rob of his arrows.---One Holy Family by Andrea del Sarto attracts notice: while another by the same hand is quite offensive to the eye; for the little John has an insufferably foreshortened arm, which appears on the very first glance. The guide said it had been spoilt in repairing.—A Judith (I have forgotten by whom) is the first of the kind that ever detained me with any pleasure. She is depicted immediately after the tragic deed. Her maid is busy in putting the head into a bag. The heroine is carrying a lamp: she holds her hand before the light, and looks steadily into a corner as if she feared something. We might ask: "What does she fear? Holofernes is dead." But the artist who draws the countenance of a woman after a deed of this kind, full of dread and wild apprehension, searching in every corner as if for a ghost, knows the human heart better than he who presents her triumphantly holding up the head to view.—An excellent portrait by Guilio Clavio, who adorned the famous *codex* of Tasso with fine delinea-

tions, is also to be found here.—In the heads of St. Peter and St. Jerome, Guercini has produced masterly pieces. I should prefer however the peasant between two gypsies, by Michael Angelo; if one of them, while picking the pockets of the peasant, did not make with his other hand some indecent signs. The other gypsy is telling the man his fortune. The whole is inconceivably just.---On surveying a picture of a Satyr decorating a statue of Bacchus with vine-leaves, we are pleased with hearing the name of Matthias.—A Descent from the Cross by Albert Durer affords two excellent heads; namely, those of Mary and John. By none was ever pain so strikingly depicted as by this artist. The other heads are very bad; but I am told the whole has suffered greatly.---No mother will pass the Madonna of Carlo Maratti unmoved. The child is sleeping; and the mother, with a heavenly smile, covers it with her garment.---A principal ornament of the whole collection, is a large rich picture of the Crucifixion, by a painter (Bernardo Gatti)

whose name I now heard for the first time with astonishment. Why is he not more famous? His composition, drawing, colouring, and expression of the heads, all appear to me admirable: there is also a mark of genius, though not of a bigoted genius, in putting more strength and fire into the countenance of the wicked thief than into that of his converted neighbour.

Is it possible that I have already passed through a gallery containing many thousands of pictures? I cannot quit it finally without recommending to every one who wishes to leave this place with an agreeable sensation, to cast a passing glance on the jocose picture of six blind men holding by each other's coats. The first, who is their leader, takes a false step, and tumbles; and all the rest tumble down after him.

EXCURSION TO PUZZUOLI.

When we hear enthusiasts talking of the wonders to be seen, in and about Puzzuoli, we drive thither with great expectations; but

find only a few curiosities, mostly not worth seeing.

The way leads first through the Grotto of Pausilippus. This is, however, no *grotto:* but a broad well paved road; which, to the astonishment of all who see it for the first time, leads through the middle of a mountain, and is so long that with a hard trot we can scarcely get to the end of it in five minutes. Our feelings in passing through it are much the same as in going through the gate and arch of a fortress. The road itself is truly singular, and this singularity impresses us strongly. Its arch also in some places is of a vast height, exceeding even eighty feet.---In other respects, the passage is far from being agreeable. In the first place, it is very dark; as it receives its light merely at the extremities, which are at least two thousand feet distant from each other. It is therefore very conceivable that in the middle it is impossible to see to thread a needle. An attempt has indeed been made, to introduce a few openings on the side; but these are of little utility, es-

pecially as they are overgrown with weeds. Seneca speaks of the thick darkness in this grotto, as it is termed. In the second place, from the eternal drought in the cavity, it is always filled with dust. Cattle are often driven through, and then this is perfectly insupportable. Added to this, we are under perpetual apprehensions of meeting other carriages to block up the way, or of crush ing some foot-passenger.---In short, we feel ourselves perfectly happy to get out of this place. That such a way was made to prevent the necessity of passing the mountain or by the sea-shore, is something incomprehensible to me. I am far more inclined to join with those who imagine that stones and sand were originally brought from the mountain for building, from which by degrees a mound was formed, and continually made deeper till the conceit was hit on of digging it completely through. In the early periods it was much lower. Many kings and viceroys have enlarged, heightened, and paved it: and have also provided it with a chapel; which, as it stands in the middle,

must of course always have lights burning in it. The hermit who lives here is said to be a blind man, and indeed he has no occasion for his sight.

On leaving the Grotto, we drive on the right hand down to the lake Agnano. The bed of this lake is taken by some to be an extinguished volcano: others think that the country-house of Lucullus stood here. The former opinion is founded on the sulphureous vapour, and the boiling of the water; and the latter on some vestiges that are still extant. For my part, I have seen neither the boiling of the water nor the vestiges; but only a fine lake, on which were wild ducks that nobody but the king may shoot. I smelt indeed a sulphureous vapour: but it appeared to me not to rise from the lake; for close by its bank lies the Dog's-grotto, and a few steps from that the sweating-bath of some saint.---The famous Dog's-grotto is a mere hole in the mountain, closed in by a miserable door. The brimstone-cave near Pyrmont is much finer, and the effect of the whole there is just as strong. A poor dog

is here tortured by seizing all his legs, laying him on the floor, and pressing his head down. In a few moments he begins to breathe hard: and when he is half-dead, he is thrown out; sometimes even into the lake, where he soon recovers himself. It is an unpleasant sight, and the dogs expressly kept for this experiment are indeed exposed to the most cruel destiny. The torturing of animals is always criminal; but doing so in order to convince an inquisitive traveller that a noxious air rises from the ground, ought not to be permitted by the government. Let the traveller only take the trouble to stoop down and put his nose to the ground, and the smell will convince him of it with equal force; or he may satisfy himself by another experiment, in which on the guide lighting a torch, the flame blazes bright, but as soon as he holds it against the floor it is immediately extinguished. This is repeated several times, and looks in reality very pretty; and what is still better, it costs neither man nor beast a single pain.---I would advise no one who has irri-

table nerves to visit the sweating-bath. A small arched chamber is built over a gulf that is constantly smoking and evaporating a sulphureous smell. This bath is said to be very efficacious for many descriptions of disorders, which I am inclined to believe; but I almost think it is better to remain sick, than to be suffocating here every day for hours together.

We return from the lake of Agnano by very rough ways to the high road of Puzzuoli. As we reach the sea-shore, the eye meets the small island of Nisida; which is properly only a mountain rising steeply on all sides out of the sea. It is covered with green, and affords a pleasing aspect. It is said to have been formerly annexed to the continent, and then belonged to the villa of Lucullus. In later times this island was called San Salvadore. Constantine granted it to the monks.—At present a quarantine is established there, and merchantmen are sent thither for that purpose. I have indeed seen ships lying there; but as to the quarantine, it is easy

to get rid of that for some piastres.—The most remarkable circumstance respecting this island is, that a young Frankfort merchant has purchased and intends to cultivate it. This conceit is the more singular, as its air was in very bad repute among the ancients for its extreme unhealthiness. It may also be supposed that his money must lie dead for many years before he can reap any advantage from it.

As we proceed along the agreeable road by the sea-shore, we see the New Mountain *(Monte Nuovo)*, which has nothing on it to distinguish it from other mountains. It is, however, worthy of notice, from having suddenly risen some centuries ago; but I think all the mountains round these parts were of a similar origin in some former period, earlier or later.

We now stop at the gate of Puzzuoli, alight, and climb up a hill to the right by a gentle acclivity, till a gate is opened to us which differs from all other gates in the world, by not inclosing any building, but only a large round and level space en-

compassed by steep naked rocks. If a sulphureous smell did not assail the traveller, he would never believe himself so near the terrible *Solfatara*; for what he sees announces rather a park, than a portion of the infernal regions. The first glance around indeed convinces us that here has been formerly the crater of a burning mountain; but after the barren and naked scene in the commencement is passed, the winding footpath carries us pleasantly through chesnut-shrubberies. On leaving these we stop, and look on attentively, while a man lifts up a huge stone, and throws it with all his force on the ground. The earth immediately shakes, and a hollow subterraneous rolling convinces us that we walk on only a thick crust which covers eternal fires. The experiment, which is frequently repeated, is a little impressive to see and hear. We cannot divest ourselves of the thought that the thin arch which is always struck in the same spot, must finally break through; especially as it is asserted by naturalists, and not without reason, that this volcano

has never yet ceased burning, but will one day certainly resume its station among the active mountains of that description. The smoke which is seen gushing out here and there, adds considerably to the probability of this conjecture.

Some paces further on, the guide strikes a spade into the ground, takes up a little earth, and invites the traveller to lay his hand upon it; which he may do if he chooses to burn himself. The whole side of the mountain smokes in this part, and a thick exhalation rises out of an opening which has been surrounded by a wall. On looking into it, it appears to be a fiery gulf. We see indeed no flames: but it is usual to throw a number of tiles into it; which, becoming cased with gold-coloured sulphur, and lying in the thickest smoke, look exactly as if they were red-hot, and the great heat which is felt very near them renders the delusion perfect.

Nothing more is visible in this hideous plain, which wears so frightful an aspect as to make us happy when we have turned

our backs on it. The cicerone attends the strangers down again through a far more inconvenient footpath; in order to shew him some slab-stones which he calls the Appian Way, and many old walls which he pretends were Roman palaces. Every thing internally is covered with flowers; and the hill from which the area is observed, is an artificial rising to which the former seats of the people served as the basis. If we are not aware of this beforehand, we shall not imagine ourselves in a famous amphitheatre. A humble vintner's cottage stands on the spot where once, according to Suetonius, a proud senator found himself offended at not having sufficient respect paid him by the crowd, and in consequence of which a special law was made by Augustus. Here is now no contention for precedence: the vintner lives in perfect equality and harmony with his swine and his cows; and the inclosures which formerly confined the wild beasts, serve him for cellars and stables. On the outside, some porticoes and corridors are in tolerable condition; but they have

been defiled, as an inscription relates, by the martyrdom which St. Januarius here underwent.

Our rather unsatisfactory excursion leads us on to the temple of Diana, of which we had formed high expectations. In the midst of a vineyard, we see a piece of an old wall erecting its head, and announcing itself to be the temple of Diana! It might as well have been called by any other name. —But perhaps the temple of Neptune is more remarkable? No: there it lies, directly opposite. The vestiges are rather more numerous, but do not betray its former destination. Cicero says in one place, "Puzzuoli is lying before us; but we do not see our friend Avienus, who is perhaps walking at this instant under the portico of Neptune." At present no portico is to be seen; only a dove-cot, hanging against the wall which once beheld Cesar sacrificing when about to march against Antony.

I do not wish to weary the reader with a long catalogue of fine names affixed to these old stone-heaps: it is better to pass

over them all. One is a country-house of Cicero's, another temple of the Nymphs, and so on. The only thing worth looking at is the temple of Jupiter Serapis; of which three pillars are yet standing and two lying, besides twenty-two chambers round about, a fine floor paved with white marble slabs, a round elevation for sacrificing, rings of bronze to which the animals were bound, and many other ruins. These chambers have perhaps contained many sick persons, who were once waiting for prophetic dreams. Had not the king caused twenty-two of the finest pillars to be removed, this beautiful memorial would be still more striking. It was discovered only fifty years ago; andlay probably under the waves of the sea, for the sea-worms called on this account *lithohagi* have eaten into the pillars to a certain height.

In passing we must cast a look on the ruins of the ancient Mole; which is usually called the bridge of Caligula, and

at the same time a story is told that this tyrant wished to continue it over as far as Baia. It now appears only as if great stones had been thrown in a straight line into the sea, in order to make a dry foot-path.

THE DRAMA AT NAPLES.

When I first visited the theatre which is called the Florentine *(dei Florentini)* from the street in which it lies, a new piece was announced, called "Maxwell and Malvin." The Germans must not suppose the play-bills here are so particular in information as those of their own country. There are in fact none at all printed in Naples: the only method used for informing the public, is by wooden tablets hung on both sides of the street in which the theatre stands; sometimes also they swing by a cord in the middle of the street. On this tablet are written in large characters the name of the theatre, the title of the piece, the day of representation, and the hour of commencement is mostly added: sometimes

also a short remark, by way of note, is annexed; as for example, *mai piu representata* ("has never yet been performed"), or "repeated by general desire," &c. Besides these suspended laconic invitations, there are a few of a similar kind fastened up against the wall in the capital streets of Naples. We are thus informed of nothing but the title of the piece: who the author may be, whether it is an original or a translation, what actors appear in it, what is the price of admittance, &c.; of all this there is not a word. It must be confessed that we Germans have carried our playbills to great perfection: sometimes even a fund of knowledge is contained in them; and I will venture to maintain, that a philosopher like Voltaire's Zadig, could form from them a tolerably accurate estimate of the character and morals of the people among whom they appear.

But I must attend my new acquaintances, Maxwell and Malvin, whom I am waiting for every moment with composure. They are, however, old friends; I remem-

ber them immediately when the curtain is drawn up: it is "the Sacrifice;" one of *my own* many children who are passing through the world with various fortune, meeting at one time with extravagant caresses, and at another with ill treatment. The present indeed had no occasion to complain: the piece was faithfully and well translated, excellently performed, and cordially received; so that a repetition of it was demanded for the next night, though another had been previously announced.

Three alterations only were made in the piece; which, however, I regard as so characteristic of the Italians, that on this account alone I have considered this trivial incident as worthy of notice.—In the first act the scene is omitted where the starving father sees the roll in the hand of his child; and, overpowered by hunger, is on the point of snatching it from him, but subdues his own desire when he hears that the boy is himself in a similar condition. Such a representation is *too strong* for a people in whose streets we see daily the most shock-

ing scenes of wretchedness, and who pass by them unmoved; but on the stage are too much affected by them!—I have heard a similar judgment upon it in Germany, but I cannot help reckoning this among the best scenes I ever wrote or conceived.—The second alteration is an addition. In the beginning of the second act I have depicted a public garden, where there are walking, playing, eating, drinking, and in short every thing going forward that is usual in such places. But in mine, for particular reasons, male persons only appear; and the individual and detached scenes all coincide with the whole. This was too uniform for the Italian author. Well acquainted with the taste of his nation, he places two ladies at a small table, who are conversing on the jealousy of their husbands. Whether that is suitable or not to the piece, whether it does not break the connection, is here a matter of no concern.—In a third alteration something else is also added. With me an honest porter saves the unfortunate Maxwell from the waves of the Thames, and nobly refuses

every reward. This was not sufficient for the Italian. He makes him take his silver buckles out of his shoes, and pay with them the rent of Maxwell due to the hardhearted landlord.

I repeat it, these three alterations appear to me so characteristic, that the most important results may be deduced from them. A people that are only affected by a romantic, are seldom capable of a true nobleness: a brandy-drinker is no lover of wine. Whoever does not like to see on the stage here scenes of the greatest wretchedness, which are a common daily spectacle, proves that he shuts his eyes againstthem in the streets, as is in fact the case. A single example out of thousands will evince this.—I went to take a walk one day on the Mole, after it had rained hard, and the pavement was wet and dirty. A boy of about thirteen lay naked in the middle of the street; for a few rags of the breadth of the hand which were intended to cover him but did not, can hardly deserve the name of clothing. He was drawn up together; never looking

up, nor even begging, but only moaning. Many hundred persons passed him. I paid particular attention. Most did not even cast their eyes on him; but continued their conversation, heedless (as it seemed) of the circumstance. The few who looked towards the object, did it with neither compassion nor disgust, but with an air of total unconcern. Many monks also, in companies of eight or nine, passed him close enough to touch his naked body with their robes; but their pious looks did not glance sideways on the pining child, nor was any thing more to be read in their stupid physiognomies than what a monk's usually expresses.—But I must desist. The excess of my indignation refuses utterance.

The pleasure which we might and actually do enjoy in the theatre Florentine, is greatly lessened by the danger which we are exposed to in going out or in. Only imagine a street in which but two coaches can pass, and not leave room for a foot-passenger to squeeze through without the risk of being crushed to pieces. "What is that

to me?" will every one here think who has money enough to pay for a carriage. Very good, my friend; but your own dear person is not always secure even in a carriage. I rode thither the first time; but as the narrow street is at the same time very sloping, and paved with smooth flag-stones, the carriage must go very softly for the horses to be able to keep their feet, and mine were near falling and lying under the axle-tree. We were obliged to spring out, and make the best of our way on foot, not a little rejoiced at having escaped with a whole neck. I always afterwards preferred walking to riding, being least dangerous of the two.—When on foot, we have a torch carried by a servant before us; but this must be put out when we are within about fifty paces from the theatre, because it would be impossible to press through the crowd with a burning torch without hurting somebody. We might indeed at this distance dispense with the light very well, if the regulation was properly enforced that forbids any carriage

passing the corner of the street; but this is not the case. We are, therefore, obliged every moment to look about us, that we may not come in contact with a horse's head, or with the wheels and poles of carriages. When we have made our way thus to the entrance, we find a passage and a flight of steps, both at least fifty feet broad. Through these then, which are the only way in and out, the multitude are obliged to force up and down. Were a fire to happen, every one must lay himself quietly down in his box and submit to be burnt to ashes, for he cannot think of being saved. This is the arrangement at one of the royal theatres.

The interior is not large, but is very pretty. There are five tiers of boxes. The whole has, like all the other theatres here, the form of a horseshoe; and I am much inclined to consider this form as the best. Considerable room, at least, is gained by it; and the spectators have a better view.—The scenes are very moderate, and the curtain does not even extend the whole breadth

of the stage. The former are, therefore, visible at both ends for the breadth of a hand; and the players have thus no occasion to make holes in the curtain for their own purposes.---The heat is insupportable; and if we open the box-door, the draught is no less so.---Of the very good opera buffa here, I shall defer speaking till another opportunity, in order not to dwell too long on one subject.

The theatre *San Carlo* is the first in Naples, and the largest in Europe. I have seen it once only, but it was then in its full splendour. It was on the festival of the saint who has given it his name. The royal family sat there in state: the princesses glittered with diamonds. All the boxes were adorned with fashionable ladies, who had lavished jewels on their persons for this occasion. Here also the supreme enjoyment of the females in *being seen*, was attainable in the highest degree; for the front of every box had a gilt chandelier with three torches (I will not call them merely lights) flaming

in it. As the house has in each of the six tiers ninety-eight boxes, it may be easily conceived that so many wax torches besides the candles, &c. would produce a very bright artificial day. Formerly the boxes were on the outside hung with looking-glasses; but these are said to have dazzled, as may naturally be supposed, to such an excess, that they were obliged to be exchanged for a simple tasty painting, in which genii are holding garlands of flowers with eagles and lyres intermixed, and the whole is adorned with pretty arabesks. The cieling alone is gaudy, much too gaudy, and very indifferently painted. The monstrous pit contains only seats with arms; which latter are rather too broad and inconvenient, as the room for the people is by this means much lessened. We may reckon, in consequence of these seats, how many persons the theatre will hold; which is, at the most, two thousand five hundred. The excessive glare would be prejudicial to the decorations even if they were not otherwise very in-

different. The curtain is indeed below all criticism, and no one can guess what the picture upon it is intended to represent.

It is never signified on the tablet for the day that the royal family will be present; but every one knows this by the play being announced to begin at a particular time. It does not, however, follow that at this time the bustle will commence; for the royal family take no heed of the public, but come sometimes two hours later and often half an hour sooner. In neither case is it very becoming.

A serious opera was announced: of which I shall speak as soon as I have seen it; for as it pleased the first tenor to ride out and almost break his neck, the Neapolitans were obliged, though with great dissatisfaction, to make shift with a small *opera buffa* on the splendid festival of St. Charles. The entertainments were begun with a magnificent ballet in five acts; when behold another old acquaintance—my Pizarro transformed into *a ballet!* One very silly alteration had been made, by converting Rolla

into an English ambassador, and Alonzo also into an Englishman. In the ambassador the latter recognized an old friend, who let English troops approach with swords clashing and colours flying, to rescue the loving pair. The child also which the virgin of the sun was still bearing in her lap, was produced by the enchantment of the ballet-master: it was a pretty boy, about four or five years old, who by his affecting pantomimic action excited powerful emotions in the hearts of the spectators.

The Neapolitan guards are excellently well adapted for the stage. At the close of the ballet they fall into a pretty marching dance, in which by the beat of the drum they form a great variety of figures, as crosses, circles, squares, straight lines, &c. Both male and female dancers intermix with them in their movements. At one time they had their bayonets fixed; and then, after taking them off, the females planted palm-twigs in their places. The whole representation had a pretty effect; and the fifty or sixty men, not one of whom was

under six feet, all in short English uniform, afforded a fine spectacle.

The first female dancer, signora Trabottini, does not perform amiss; but she is a little fat personage. The first male dancer is a bragging Frenchman, named Beaulieu, who has imposed himself on the Neapolitans as the first opera dancer in Paris, though in that city his name is not known. He is an insignificant performer; and yet receives six thousand ducats salary, with other perquisites. The ballet-master's name is Gaetano Gieja: he was formerly in Vienna for some time, where his talents acquired him no great reputation.

It is a singular but very agreeable custom for the spectator, that in Italy two ballets are given at a serious opera; one heroic, and the other comic. Indeed I cannot conceive how this eternal sameness in stepping and springing should not finally weary; for when we have seen one solo dance, we have seen all: but a good pantomime is certainly a very cheerful and intellectual amusement. It is a pity only that

the proper pantomime is getting more and more out of practice. The ballet-masters themselves feel that they understand nothing of it: they are always obliged to have large books printed in order to explain what they mean to represent, and besides this to have recourse to all sorts of transparent writings on the stage itself. A well-conceived ballet must be intelligible without any addition of this kind.

The comic ballet that concluded the performance of this day was called the Guardian Taylor; and it is certainly very laughable, especially as the incident is said to be founded on a fact that occurred at Naples. A young officer loved the fair ward of a taylor, who was chosen by the guardian himself to become his housekeeper. The officer hires an apartment in the next house, the wall of which communicates with the chamber of the lady. A concealed door is introduced, and clothes hung before it to conceal it from the eyes of the jealous guardian. In this manner the lovers visit each other at pleasure. One day, the wan-

ton rake of an officer has the conceit of getting his mistress's measure in men's clothes taken by the taylor himself. He accordingly dresses her out in a dashing style, and has the taylor sent for; who of course recognizes his ward, but is put out of countenance by the effrontery of the young people in denying it. In order to satisfy himself, he runs home quickly; but the girl slips into her room, and is found by him sitting very demurely at her work-table. The droll effect produced by the quick transition of the scenes, may very easily be imagined. All depends on the taylor; which part was very indifferently performed. The stage is, of course, divided through the whole length into two parts, and consequently all is seen passing in both chambers at the same time.

The theatre *San Carlo* is usually committed to some speculator called *impressario*; but since the actors both male and female demand and receive enormous salaries (as is proved by the above-mentioned instance of the insignificant monsieur Beaulieu), it is

scarcely possible for any proprietor to satisfy the public without injuring himself. For that reason no person has been found disposed to embark in it for the present year; and several noblemen have in consequence been obliged to combine and act as managers.

In this theatre we see in the passages, opposite to every box-door, a table fixed against the wall, set out with all sorts of pastry. On account of the heat, the boxes always stand open; and a plentiful supply is continually going round to every person in the party.

The street in which the theatre *San Carlo* stands, is not only broad, but also near the great Largo di Castello; so that the carriages have a convenient place, and the foot-passengers are not every moment in apprehension of coming under the wheels. However, the royal family, now residing in Portici, must have set off first; for their retinue requires an immense quantity of room. Exclusive of the six horses to his carriage, the king never drives out with

fewer than twelve dragoons round his person, and the queen the same number; the heir apparent has eight, and every princess six. We may figure to ourselves therefore sixty dragoons at least, well mounted, and provided with torches; all collected on one spot. Till this army has begun its march, it is not advisable for any one to venture out.---As I stood looking on, I could not help recalling to mind the king of Prussia; whom the blessings of his people attend to his house, and when he rides he has but a single servant to follow him, at such a distance that no one knows certainly whether he belongs to the king or not.

LIVING ARTISTS AND COLLECTORS AT NAPLES.

SCHMIDT is a pensioner of Hesse-Darmstadt, and is asserted to be the best historical painter in Naples. If that is the case, I pity the state of the art here; for though he does not paint ill, the fire of genius is not perceptible in his works. A Sleeping Venus, which is esteemed his master-piece,

is indeed pretty and of a lively colouring; but Cupid standing by seems as if he would tell his mother that it is not healthy to sleep so long. The painter has given him a pair of wings which a sportsman might be tempted to take for those of a hawk. I made this remark to Schmidt, who affirmed that they were hen's wings which he had painted after nature. I think Cupid should not flutter about with either hen's or hawk's wings.

A second picture on which this artist sets far too great a value, is Samson resting from the combat with the Philistines, and Dalila offering him a bowl for refreshment. He might as well pass off the male figure for Hercules, and the female for Deianira: in fact, the execution is so common, that I scarcely know any hero of antiquity for whom it might not answer. He has, however, ingeniously taken care that every reader of his bible should have a certain mark by which he may recognize the person referred to. This is no other than the ass's jaw-bone. There is scarcely a

more miserable subject for a painter's imagination; and any person unacquainted with the particulars of the history, would certainly suppose the picture to represent merely a young man standing with his mistress near the remains of a dead ass. Would a composer be pardoned who, in order to give an idea of pastoral music, should make use of the tones of a cow's horn? The hero who does not fight with the sword, ought to remain undelineated; for if we see only blows with the fist passing, we cannot be exalted to a sublime frame of mind by the pencil of Raphael himself.

Schmidt, however, is not himself of this opinion: and in fact is not a little gratified with the consciousness of his own merit; for he shews a third (but now unfinished) picture, of the battle between the Romans and the Sabines. It is gaudy, and as cold as a sheet of ice. I threw out a hint that I had lately seen the same subject treated by David in Paris. Schmidt was of opinion that David's composition was faulty; as, he said, he had placed the two kings

opposite to each other on foot, though it was clear from Livy and Plutarch that they were on horseback. Now I must indeed do *him* the justice to say that his kings are actually on horseback; but Romulus looks as if he would take a ride and command his people to make way, while Tatius cuts a most deplorable figure. David needs not fear that I shall forget myself so far as to draw a parallel. Setting aside every thing else, Schmidt has committed one great fault in dividing the interest: for in his picture not only the anxious peace-making women are observable, but those also who have lost their husbands in the field are seen weeping over their dead bodies; and what is still worse, these are principal figures. The filling up of the back-ground is, to be sure, of inferior importance; but a man who appeals so boldly to Livy and Plutarch, ought to have known that at the time of this battle Rome could not boast such magnificent temples and pillars of all the five orders as stand here. The first temples were extremely small and inconsiderable.

Landscapes are entirely out of Schmidt's sphere. A Night, representing Jason's flight with Medea, is worse than indifferent; though the artist speaks of it with true paternal affection.

The sculptor Riga is one of the most distinguished at present in Europe. I have seen pastes of his that might deceive Winkelmann himself. He does portraits also, and we may be immortalised by him for the moderate price of fifty ounces (about 22*l.*) I have seen the portrait of lady Hamilton twice at his house, and that of the landscape-painter Hackert: both are in the highest perfection. His stock of heads in the antique style is considerable, and the sight of any one of them carries us by a charm back to the times of ancient Greece. Whoever, in addition to this, is so happy as to be introduced to his wife, and to obtain from her modesty a few sonnets on the harp, will have spent certainly some of his agreeablest

hours in Naples; for she is as excellent in her art as he is in his.

It would be unfortunate if every man had one article only which he incessantly pursued, without deviation to any other. The different objects would in that case attain a much greater perfection, because the tree thrives best that has not a hundred branches to nourish with its sap; but where would any be found to admire these master-pieces of human industry, or to convert the results of these labours to advantage? Not to mention that man is so confined in his character, that if every individual concentrated his powers and happiness within one point, he would feel an insupportable apathy for every thing else; the human race would thus be divided into mere sects, each of which would be contemning the others. It is therefore very good that there are flowers which are beautiful only; but no less so that there are bees

who rove from one flower to another loading their trunks, and finally offering us what the flowers cannot, namely honey.

In justice to every species of merit, I gladly pay the intelligent chevalier Calcagni his tribute. He is a native of Palermo; and his only occupation, to which his heart and soul are devoted, is that of collecting old coins of his country (Sicily). The collection which he already possesses is select, and perhaps unparallelled, without being very numerous. All his coins are in excellent condition, and a great number of them rival the best camoens in beauty and perfection. He collects, of course, as a philosopher; and attempts to render his apparently dry pursuits essentially useful in enriching the history of his country, and clearing up numerous obscurities in the early ages. A work in which he has been engaged many years is now in the press; and will excite the astonishment of numismatists and historians, by many discoveries. I will endeavour to give a few examples.

Plautus, in his comedies, mentions two kings of Syracuse, whom he calls Fintias and Liparo. The poet only, and no historian, has preserved their names: and because historians usually look upon poets as not standing on a level with them for veracity, the honest Plautus has not been believed upon his word that two such kings ever existed; and even a venerable academician at Paris is said to have proved in a very learned treatise, that this was merely a dramatic fiction. Coins of Fintias were indeed already known, but he was taken to be a nobleman of Agrigentum; and of king Liparo it was supposed that no traces were to be found. But Calcagni proves, by many of his coins, that Plautus is in this respect no liar, and Fintias was actually king of Syracuse: for in the first place a nobleman never had the title of *basilius* (king) given to him; and secondly his coins bear the image of Diana Conservatrix, who was worshipped by the Syracusans. As to Liparo, Calcagni has discovered that there are still coins of his existing; but that hitherto it has been

thought, from the similarity of the names, that they must have belonged to the Lipari islands. Thus then there are in reality two kings, who would certainly have done better in immortalizing themselves by their *deeds*, nominally at least restored to their rights; and, with some pride I venture to add, to a writer of plays is due the glory of having rescued them from oblivion. How many princes look with scorn upon the poet who is perhaps destined, after two thousand years, to announce to posterity that their majesties were once in being!

Calcagni possesses a remarkable coin of Segestus. It has a Punic or Phœnician inscription, but all the rest have Greek characters; which proves that the Punic language was in use in the beginning of the reign of Segestus, though by degrees it died away.—Many coins of the execrable tyrant Agathocles bear marks of the infallible decision of posterity. They are stamped on one side with the image of Diana, which the people have changed into a Jupiter Im-

berbis. On the other side stood the thunderbolt; but the people placed their eagle (the emblem of Syracusan freedom) upon it, and that in so hasty a manner as to leave still visible traces of both the original impressions. Perhaps they laid a couple of the unstamped pieces into the tyrant's grave, to pay Charon for ferrying him over. May every tyrant be depicted like the abashed Agathocles; standing before his gloomy ferryman, who regards the restamped coin with a scornful smile! I never saw an image more fit to impress the idea of the judgments of posterity. It would be worthy the pencil of a Guerino.

Of the coins on which the Syracusans stamped their divine patroness, the nymph Arethusa, Calcagni possesses a great number; and it is very remarkable, that in their head-dress they were always regulated by the existing fashion. The hair is adorned in an infinitely varied manner, and the frequent singular fashions appear to evince that they did not receive their origin in the fancy of the artist. These coins may be

regarded as the oldest *journals of fashion* in the world. If the catholics had followed the same practice with their representations of the holy Virgin, we might have had a complete series of *fashionable reports* for eighteen centuries.

It frequently seems, in surveying the old Sicilian coins, as if we were suddenly transported into the christian ages, by the constant recurrence of the cross in various forms. But this cross is of Egyptian origin, and is said to have been an emblem of immortality among that people. For this reason, old tomb-stones must not always be pronounced christian when they have a cross. Many bearing this mark stood unquestionably on the tombs of heathens.

Calcagni attempts, with considerable acuteness, to prove that some gold coins of king Geron, or Hieron, in the cabinet at Paris, are false; but I am inclined to think that the partiality for his own collection has here carried him a little too far. He himself is in possession of complete coins of Geron, from his youth, for Geron

reigned above fifty years; and his increasing age is very visibly distinguished in the heads. Now the size and stamp of the Parisian gold coins accord completely with the size and stamp of his copper ones; and he supposes on this account, that the former were modelled from the latter. I think this is no necessary conclusion. Geron may surely, in fifty years, have had gold coins stamped similar to those in copper. From all this, however, I can deduce no other certainty, than that Calcagni *does not* possess a gold coin of Geron.

I will not conclude this subject without adding that the chevalier Calcagni is the most polite and hospitable man imaginable, and one whose talents and information entitle him to universal esteem.

The archbishop of Tarento, an amiable liberal man with an intelligent physiognomy, possesses many fine pictures, and a collection of Etruscan vases which is said to be of great value. I confess that I shall

never catch the infection of this attachment. However many old vessels I may see, or however much I may hear about the beauty of their representations, I shall still regard them as nothing more than unintelligible broken pots, with stiff caricatures that are never to be thoroughly divined. For no one must believe that they really look as Winkelmann and sir William Hamilton have had them engraved in copper-plates. They resemble these just as little as ugly princesses do their miniature-pictures which are sent to foreign courts for the purpose of getting husbands for the originals. —I have seen here and there, for example, imitations of Etruscan vases with the most charming pictures, which I should have infinitely preferred to these antiques: but then I am, to be sure, not one of the initiated, who know how to estimate the true value of antique pot-daubing. I always view with the stare of astonishment those who, standing before such a pot, fall into ecstacies, and every instant discover new beauties, all of which are unfortunately

from me. Sometimes, however,
to suspect that Winkelmann, Ha-
other great men, have put a
world and themselves.
from flames a great noise,
disposed to visit it.
from it are in a short
pieces of which are
may thus probably
joined again with
interest from their
more adventure
important either to
stories
connection of coins:
seems im-
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ask some
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archbishop has many which undeniably belong to Taranto with owls upon them.—Sometimes his imagination plays him a trick, as is common with antiquarians. He found, for example, an old copper piece, upon which a man was seated on a horse, covered with a large mantle, and extending his hand forwards: behind him is to be perceived a thing which may certainly be taken for a cap. What does the good archbishop make of all this? "When the Grecians were before Troy," says he, "their wives at home, not being all Penelopes, found the time long; and by way of shortening it, entertained themselves with their slaves and men-servants, and (as it happened) thus produced a number of boys. When the victorious Grecians returned home, not finding much pleasure from this increase of their families, they drove all the boys together out of the city. The youths, united by distress, entered the wide world to seek their living; and, as an emblem for their standard, chose a cap: upon which occasion these coins were struck. The outstretched

hand represents a distant journey; the waving of the mantle," which, by the way, does not wave at all, "represents the same; and the emblematical cap renders the whole *perfectly clear.*" The good prelate has never put the question to himself, Who struck this coin? the Greeks themselves, to eternize their own disgrace; or the youths, who were hunted away naked and bare, and could hardly take with them the apparatus for such an operation?

I would just as little vouch that a large square plate of copper with an elephant upon it, is an *ex voto* which the Romans made after the battle lost against Pyrrhus, because that was the first time of their contending in battle, or becoming acquainted, with this animal.—However, I must own that all these doubts started in my mind on leaving the amiable archbishop; for while hearing him speak it was impossible not to believe.

Though I possess little taste for landscape-painting, I cannot but admire Denis; for

the excellent of every kind can excite an interest in my breast. I saw the first landscape by this artist at the house of the French ambassador Alquier, an amiable and well-informed man. This determined me on visiting the painter in his study. Here he was just finishing an enchanting picture; Poussin and Hackert have never roused such emotions in me as I then felt. Poussin is dead; but when Denis himself is so, the muses and mankind will allow him the superiority.

It is said that his principal talent lies in back-grounds, his fore-grounds not being faultless; as with Hackert the contrary is maintained to be the case: he is criticized for choosing and painting Italian countries, but introducing into them the cattle of the Netherlands; with many other similar cavilings which I am not disposed to detail. His picture had probably a stronger effect on me than usual, because it is not merely a landscape, but diversified with historical and moral incidents. A peasant's cottage has been struck by lightning, and is

in flames. The wife is flying with her sucking infant in her arms. The man is trying to draw out his horse; which, in the usual manner of all animals on such occasions, makes violent resistance, kicks vehemently, and has struck another child to the ground. But the cattle have been already driven out into the fields, and are running about roaring and foaming. A bull is directing his course towards the bridge; where the dog, faithful to his charge, stands ready to oppose his passage. The grey rocks on the right hand, against which the brook is flowing down, are remarkably beautiful. The picture is destined for the French general Soult.

I saw here likewise a faithful delineation of this year's eruption of Vesuvius, and many sketches relating to the same subject. One of Denis's best landscapes, belonging to general Acton, stood unfortunately packed up to be sent to Sicily. He is so overwhelmed with orders, particularly from Russia, that there is seldom any thing to be had of him ready executed; for he

has no sooner given the last stroke to a picture, than it is immediately sent for with as much eagerness as if the purchaser were afraid the painter should be persuaded to part with it to some other person. It is also worthy of observation that he is not obliged to be continually at work for a living; as he gets the monstrous sum of from eighteen hundred to two thousand Neapolitan ducats (about 550*l.*) for a single picture. Whoever wishes to see the finest landscapes in Naples, by the three greatest masters Denis, Hackert, and Reinhardt, together, must visit the respectable banker Heigelin. But without being an amateur of landscapes, he will notwithstanding find much pleasure in visiting that gentleman; in whom he sees an upright and cheerful old man with an amiable family.

A SCENE OF HORROR AT NAPLES.

As I was one morning passing through a populous street, I perceived a crowd of people assembled before the stall of a shoe-

maker, round a woman lying on the ground. It being a custom with me to neglect no opportunity of watching the people, I pushed through towards the place; where lay *a woman dying*. At the same time I heard from the lips of many by-standers the words (which chilled my blood), "*She is dying of hunger.*" The sight of the suffering creature confirmed this but too powerfully. She was scarcely covered with rags, and appeared a miserable skeleton of about thirty or forty. She lay on the pavement close by the shoemaker's stall; and by her side stood a broken straw-bottomed chair which had been pushed towards her. That she was in the agonies of death, was evident. No one passed without standing a moment to survey the hideous spectacle; but all went on again as soon as they had satisfied their curiosity, without attempting to assist her. I had pushed through the crowd, till I was the nearest to her. With my purse in my hand, I prayed for God's sake, I called on the holy Virgin, that some one would have mercy on her; but in

vain! In the open stall were a master and two journeymen: I offered them all I had by me if they would take the woman in, and lay her on a bed; but to no purpose. One of the men actually laughed; probably at my bad Italian. It is some consolation to me to think that the dying person understood my motions, if not my words; for her look rested on me, and I was the last object on which her closing eye was fixed. Upon that, she immediately died!

I was still not disposed to believe it; I retained the hope of being able to save her, and therefore continued to keep my post near her: but a person, probably a physician, passing by, took hold of her hand, and feeling her pulse, pronounced with great composure, "*She is dead,*" and went on. I also now stepped back to a little distance, but did not leave the street, that I might witness the end of this scene. The corpse lay a quarter of an hour in the street, stared at by thousands; till at length some sbirri came, and dragged it away. Yes: I now deprecate this horrid incident

before all Europe. I say aloud, *On the fourth of December* 1804, *at ten in the morning, a human being perished with hunger in the street Giacomo, one of the most populous streets in the city of Naples.*—N. B. The king went to the chase to-day; when I saw twenty or thirty dogs passing, and all in excellent condition.

THE CATACOMBS.

The entrance to these is by a little church of St. Januarius, lying in a very distant part of the city. To describe these habitations of the lower world in a clear manner, is a difficult task; yet I will attempt it.

A wide cavern opens upon us, which we descend with a lighted torch. An altar is shewn us, in which the body of St. Januarius was once inclosed; and behind the altar a chair fixed in the wall, from which the ministers of the first christians are said to have preached. I will not vouch for the truth of this assertion: but thus much appears certain; that this chair is very old,

and that it has not been fastened into the wall without an object. A person has certainly sat upon it, who has chosen to sit alone: he was without doubt surrounded by many people, whom he addressed sitting. The place is by no means damp; nor in any way filled with bad air, or very dark: for the wide entrance to the cave stands open, and indeed appears to have never been shut. I do not believe therefore that the primitive christians held *secret* meetings here: but the poor people had no money to build churches; and finding here one ready and suited to their necessities at that time, they made use of it.

Perhaps also the funeral service was performed for those buried here, and then the corpse was carried to the pit on the left-hand side.---I suppose this representation for a moment true, and see it passing in imagination. The bier, on which the corpse rests without a coffin, stands before the chair of the old man, who was not at that time called bishop: he pronounces his blessing on the dead person, for whom also

the surrounding spectators pray silently. The bearers now raise the bier, the torches proceed forward, and the dark cavern receives the whole train. The spacious streets in this city of death are over-arched with rocks that extend along to a sufficient height and breadth for the procession to pass unobstructed. It strikes into a passage which seems endless: the torches burn more dimly; and we fancy we see the *ignis fatuus* dancing before us. On both sides the rock is seen still inhabited; for on the right and left, beds as narrow and low as those in a ship's cabin are hewn out for the dead. In rows like the cells of bees, the little chambers are cut in the rocks, suited to the different sizes of children or adult persons; but we see no difference between the cell of the nobleman and that of the beggar. The train passes on for miles amidst these dumb inhabitants, seeking a place for the new-comer. At length a fresh-made bed is seen: here they lay him; and he slumbers calmly, perhaps by the side of his enemy. A stone is placed be-

fore the tomb with his name, and then the mourners leave him; for the torches begin to flag in their light, and they hasten back with anxious solicitude. Their eagerness is not without reason: for if a side passage should mislead them, or their torches be extinguished, no one can ever hear their voice supplicating assistance; they continually lose themselves more and more in the labyrinth of death, and wander in desperation from tomb to tomb, till at length, half stifled and starved, they may dig their own graves with their nails.

This must not be taken for a picture of fancy: many have already found their death here, from wandering too far, or from their torches betraying them; for the passages are dug in the rocks without any order, apparently according to accident or caprice. Three subterraneous stories rise above one another, and their arches rest on numberless pillars. Sometimes we mount imperceptibly the upper story, and sometimes are obliged to guard against slipping down into the lower one through a gap

formed by the earthquake. Whoever chooses (and some of this description there have been) may extend his gloomy perambulation for many miles, even as far as Puzzuoli.

The numberless receptacles for the dead are for the greater part filled with sculls and bones, but some are entirely empty. Whether these belonged to christian martyrs or heathens, or whether the people who died some centuries ago of the plague were thrown in here, is perfectly indifferent to me. My two guides believed the first with pious confidence. On leaving Germany I had promised a friend to bring back for him a bone from the catacombs: I now remembered this, and begged the favour of one. The cicerone freely consented; but the torch-bearer, a little old man, opposed it very earnestly. The cicerone, who expected a liberal recompence, tried to satisfy his companion by the suggestion that my desire sprung merely *per devozione*, "from piety." I directly confirmed this, with an asseveration to the same purpose; which

finally satisfied the scruples of the torch-bearer, who stepped into the pit for the purpose of selecting one. But he was very difficult in making his choice, and rejected many which appeared to him too important. He at length fixed on a small bone; and, if my eyes did not deceive me, actually kissed it before he delivered it into my hands. I was obliged to promise that no Neapolitan should be informed of this transaction; and, satisfied with my mouldered plunder, I hastened out of this gloomy region.

I shall not weary my reader with tedious conjectures relative to the origin of the catacombs; for, after all, I should only be obliged to copy them from books which are in every one's hands. As the most natural interpretations are the most agreeable to me, I think with those who imagine that originally stones and Puzzuoli-earth were taken out of the mountain for building; and that the cavities and passages thus increased till they were at length so deeply dug in, that the getting out materials

for building became too difficult, after which some person hit on the idea of burying the dead here. This was approved of; and has been practised even in pagan times, as thousands of inscriptions and urns still extant evince.

THE DRAMA AT NAPLES.

I HAVE already, in this volume, said something on this subject, but must now return to it. A foreigner who hopes to spend his winter evenings here agreeably, will find himself disappointed unless he is a perfect friend to the Italian taste; for if he is old-fashioned enough to visit the theatre in order to hear, he will not be satisfied with the same opera every day for three months successively, even though St. Cecilia herself should have composed it. To the Italians, however, this is a matter of no consequence; as they attend the theatre for the sake of talking, or at the most of honouring a particular terzett or quartett with their attention. When a favourite piece

of music commences, a sudden stillness ensues among them; as a flock of geese are still for a moment on the discharge of a gun, but to recommence their gabbling with double violence afterwards. In the recitatives a particular scene has now and then the credit of reducing them to silence; but there must then be a dreadful screaming on the stage, or otherwise the scene passes over unnoticed.

The theatre Florentini is the only one which gives dramas and comedies, and in the fast-days tragedies also. It has a very excellent company: but unfortunately is under the direction of a female manager; who, in spite of her advanced age and decayed person, will continue to perform the parts of lovers. If a character is too young, she suppresses the piece altogether.

They give here few original pieces, for they have only few to give. The plots and incidents which they represent are extravagant, but not romantic: they are seldom founded on any basis of reality, and are not rendered interesting by diversity of cha-

racter. Propriety and consistency are totally lost in them.—There is, for example, a piece called "The Surgeon of Aquisgrana." The surgeon, a devotee to his profession, has contrived to procure the body of a criminal who has been broken on the wheel, for the purpose of dissection; but when he is about to begin his operation, he finds life remaining in the man, and cures him completely. From this single incident five acts have been spun out, in which the suffering criminal is continually passing before the eyes of the spectators.—The same delightful idea has been made the groundwork of "The Damsel of Oxford." The poor girl is charged with theft, thrown into prison, and is to be hanged. Fortunately her lover is a student of medicine: he gives her a sleeping potion; she is looked upon as dead; and is delivered over as a criminal to the anatomical theatre of the university. We now see all the anatomical instruments lying about, the students are assembled to attend the dissection, when the slumbering maiden awakes in the arms of her lover!

Is not this *affecting?*—Even "The prudent Lady" appears to me, with the exception of some good ideas, a very indifferent piece. The whole *prudence* of the lady consists in having deceived her husband; and, though with perfect honour, stealing to the prison of her lover to cure her husband of his jealousy.

Most of their pieces are translations, of which I have seen some indeed from all languages. Of my own "Sacrifice," from the German, I have already spoken.* I saw also the first act of my "Stranger," but it had been so metamorphosed and misused that I could not sit to the end. The part of Peter had been struck out; and instead of him the old man was provided with a daughter, who was obliged to beg of the Stranger (who is here a hermit). After the Stranger has pressed the purse into the old man's hand, he does not run away like one shunning mankind who does good

* Pages 181 and 183.

against his will: instead of that, he remains, permits the old man to thank him kneeling, lets his servant who watches him kiss his hands, and explains in a long philosophical speech why he has given the money. The piece is said to have been mangled throughout in this manner. The count, for example, does not make his appearance till the stranger has saved his life; not out of the water, but from frightened horses who had run away with him.—I suppose the reader will be satisfied with this specimen.

The opera buffa in the theatre Florentini, which is given in turn with the recitative performance, is better supplied.—The opera seria also I have seen in the theatre San Carlo. One of the musicians, named Vittorio Trento, has had the rashness to compose an Iphigenia in Aulis. His music is said to be fine: I dare say it is, for it is very tedious. The prima donna is a fat ugly old woman, whose voice has not charms enough to make her person forgotten. The Achilles opposed to her is, for want of an

eunuch, a female, who sings well but acts badly. In fact, they both together make but poor figures. I shall not speak of the rest: they keep themselves modestly within the bounds of moderation.—The miserable poet has a splendid name: it is signor don Giuseppe Cavaliere Pagliuca de Conti di Manupello. It is not to be supposed that a man with such a name would condescend to write any thing well. In his preface indeed he confesses that Metastasio had before his time handled the subject, yet had foldowed Euripides and Racine too much; and from the change of public taste, it has been necessary to give a new Iphigenia, that the stage might not entirely lose this lyric subject.---The reader, I hope, will not expect me to present him with any extract from this puerile performance. The decorations, by Dominicho Chelli, were very indifferent: the orchestra was too weak; and in precision, as well as expression, far beneath the Parisian. In short, the great expectation which many travellers had excited in my mind of the opera here, were

considerably disappointed. The cavaliers, who are the proprietors of it, speak in terms of the highest confidence respecting it in a dedicatory address to the king; in which, like genuine courtiers, they compare the king to Augustus without blushing: but the public has made them bitterly feel their delusion. No theatre is more deserted than the magnificent San Carlo; and fruitless efforts are made, sometimes by illuminations and sometimes by new dances, to allure spectators. The emptiness of the boxes is attributable to the monstrous prices; which the cavaliers, in order to pay their indifferent Parisian dancers, have raised very high this year: a box in the third row costs seven ducats (3*l.*). The pit, on the contrary, is disproportionately cheap; the admittance being only half a dollar (1*s.* 6*d.*): and yet it also remains empty.

The third theatre at Naples is the *theatro novo*, in which a particular company gives the opera buffa. This theatre, like the rest here, is constructed in the very convenient

form of a horseshoe: it has five tiers of boxes, and is simply but neatly decorated.—The same remark applies to the fourth theatre, called *del Fondo*. This is the largest, except San Carlo; and enjoys the advantage (which is here singular) of standing in an open place. It is, however, the least fashionable.—The company sometimes give noisy pieces here. I saw one called the African Wedding; in which two bands of Turkish music come forward, who threaten to deafen the spectators. Whole armies marched in files upon the stage: a beautiful princess rode on a living steed, and her two pages in like manner on mares; a Moorish king paraded on an elephant, and his general pranced upon a wild courser: a storm came on, and wrecks were seen swimming towards the shore; a battle ensued; a dreadful firing took place. What more could be desired? More however was certainly given; but I left it in the second act, and am therefore not able to give a further account.

The manager sometimes brings forward his own jests on the *theatro novo*: and I have seen one of these; but it would be a waste of ink, paper, and time, to give any account of it. The *Pulcinella* (a sort of clown, in a white and often dirty shirt, masked in black, with a white high-top hat) is always the principal personage; but as he speaks merely in the Neapolitan dialect, his jests are mostly local, and can have no interest for a foreigner.—But the manner of their announcing these noisy pieces is too singular, and may prove too useful to the managers of theatres, for me to neglect giving a specimen of it. It runs thus: "The murderous battles and hideous combats in Africa, have for a long time not been witnessed on the stage. Those deeds, however, are much too memorable, and the incidents too complicated, not to inflame the imagination of the poet. On this plan an anonymous author has formed an heroic piece. It is written for the company of Grancola, who will spare no pains

to give it a just representation. It is called the African Wedding, or the Conquest of Pombucto; with the Pulcinella, the sport of the waves and conqueror of the Moors. The dresses are newly made for the purpose; the decorations have never been seen; and the Pulcinella performs the principal part. We flatter ourselves with very great hopes of satisfying an honourable public," &c.—Pulcinella usually exhibits his feats in this small theatre; but when there is any splendid piece to be performed, he then hires a larger one for some evenings. He has more original representations than any other company, but he does not reject translations; there are but very few pieces whic it it is not in his power to turn to some purpose. If only a servant comes forward in the play, he is converted into a clown, though the rest may be tragical.

The fifth theatre, San Ferdinando, I have not seen: it lies in a very remote part of the city, and is mostly shut unless when Pulcinella exhibits his farces there. It is said to be as large and well-built as the

others.—The sixth theatre is a fantoccini: which, however, is not entirely to be passed over; for the inside is tolerably large, has a tier of boxes, and is prettily ornamented. The scenes and decorations are well painted. The puppets are of the size of a boy of twelve or thirteen, well drest, and make very natural motions except that they walk badly: the people who direct them declaim as well as at any of the other theatres, and the pieces represented are not in any respect inferior. The higher ranks of people, who are now accustomed to the *intellectual* amusement of *games of hazard*, consider it a disgrace to be seen here. I remember having seen a fantoccini in Berlin, which was sometimes visited by persons of respectability and fashion; and even which the modern poets maintained to be preferable to the national theatre, as it gave *the proper* comedy. They were right, for they took their own pieces as the standard.

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A few small Pulcinella-theatres deserve no particular mention. They perform many

times a day, merely for the rabble: whom they draw round them partly by great pictures hung out, and partly by the tricks of the clown; who does not properly belong to the company, and has nothing to do the whole day but stand at the door on a table, and chatter with the mob about the glorious things they will see within. In the evening he lights up torches, and gets the boys in the street to hold them. We cannot help admiring his indefatigable lungs.

The court visits only the theatre San Carlo, and sometimes (but seldom) that of Florentini. In the latter I had once the good or ill fortune to meet with the court: I may certainly term it the latter; for it was a rainy day, and all the streets leading to the theatre were many hours before occupied with dragoons on horseback, who bustled about with their drawn swords among the populace. Every one must alight in the last street, and go on foot the rest of the dirty way; in which he will be covered with dirt by the horses of the dragoons. Even in the lobbies of the theatre we must crowd

through ranks of grenadiers; who, rendered impudent by their situation, will give way to no one. The arrival of the court increases the danger in the streets; for it brings another great detachment of dragoons with it, who ride on before, and suddenly take possession of the theatre on both sides, crushing against the wall without mercy all who are standing by. In going out it is naturally still worse. In short, I advise every one who thinks of going to the theatre Florentini, to inquire first whether the court are coming, and in this case rather to stay at home. Such indications of distrust are, of course, not calculated to increase the love of the people.---Here the court also first set the hour of commencement, and then never keep it themselves. We often read, "By supreme command, the play will commence at five in the evening," and find it begin at half after eight, or sometimes at half after four. Whether the spectators are wearied or pleased, is no question with the court.

THE PORCELAIN-MANUFACTORY.

The warehouse of the royal manufactory is not remarkable either for riches or perfection. The clay appears to be of an inferior quality; at least, it has a yellowish hue. The paintings are coarse: they are mostly copies of the pictures from Herculaneum and Pompeii, and this is the greatest object of pride here. "If we cannot equal other countries in some things," say they, "we have at least the best patterns for painting." I could almost venture to deny this, as far as it applies to the works of art dug out of those cities. It is with ancient pictures as with many poetical works that cannot be translated into other languages: as soon as they are copied, the veil with which venerable antiquity had enveloped them is torn off, and their faults are directly glaring. Some vases excepted; the forms of the rest are mostly very tasteless. The price of porcelain in Naples is very high, but the demand is trifling; as foreigners find better every where else, and for the inhabitants porcelain is *too cleanly*.

SOME WORKS OF ART IN THE PALACES OF THE GREAT.

MANY palaces described by modern travellers are no longer extant, having been destroyed in the revolution; and others have sprung up which did not exist before that epoch.

In the palace of the prince Santobona is a numerous collection of pictures, which occupy a hall and seven or eight chambers completely. For the convenience of foreigners, two tablets are to be found in every chamber, upon which the pictures, together with the names of the painters, are noted down in the Italian, French, German, and English languages. This is a very delicate attention of the prince, which demands the thanks of every foreigner; but he should not have decorated his lists with so many famous names which raise the highest expectations. If we turn our eyes from the names of Titian or Raphael to the pictures themselves, with what amazement do we look about in search of beauties and find

none! It is true, I am not a sufficient judge to pronounce that the pieces ascribed by the prince Santobona to the greatest masters are not their performances: but thus much I may say without presuming to penetrate into the arcana of the arts; that if they are, never did those masters put their pencils to the canvas with less success.

The Scourging of Christ, a large picture by Rubens, holds in my opinion the first rank, and does real honour to the name of its painter. It is in every respect excellent, and is one of the most remarkable pictures I have seen in Naples. It is a pity only that the choice of the subject is so unhappy: for who, as an artist, will like to dwell long on a picture that represents a man receiving stripes, and having the blood run down his body?—The Martyrdom of St. Cecilia, by Dominichino, deserves particular notice; as containing the truest delineations, which evince the poetical imagination of the painter: the subject, however, is equally painful to me, and the colouring appears to be a little too high.—An Ascension, by Va-

sari, leads me to a repetition of my remark, how few painters there are who know how to give a faithful representation of human feelings in their various shades and gradations. Christ is hovering in the clouds, and seen only at a distance: the disciples form a group, and are following him with their eyes. What a wide field for the painter of souls! But these countenances express, at the most, merely a cheerful curiosity, or a stupid astonishment. Had Vasari only seen a balloon once ascending, he would have been able to collect quite different samples for his heads.—A small picture from the school of Raphael cost the prince four thousand ducats (1,600*l.*). I am at a loss to know what it is intended to represent: much of it is rubbed away, and the remainder is pretty but gaudy. Connoisseurs, as they are called, are indeed foolish people: they lay out vast sums in order to make it believed they see more than others, and yet their extravagant vanity is not able to protect them from the laugh of an unbiassed foreigner who may now and then view their

collections.----There is scarcely a famous *name* in the Italian school which may not be found at the palace of the prince of Santobona; but they are mostly *mere* names: at least, I have no recollection of any thing else, except a few fine heads.

I found it still worse for myself at the palace of the duke del Gesso, where I imagined at first they were mocking me. Even the few pictures which were concealed by curtains, would never have excited attention without these curtains. In this manner an antiquated beauty veils herself, in order at least to raise flattering conjectures. I can say nothing further of the collection of this duke, for I have had the good fortune to forget it.

The French minister Alquier is a lover and patron of the arts. His collection is indeed small, as it decorates only his study; but consists of none but select pieces. I should not, however, be disposed to let the excellent head of St. John as it lies cut off in the dish, hang in my room; the painter,

whose name I have forgotten, has represented nature with a hideous degree of truth.

The marquis Berio is one of the richest, and (a qualification which is seldom found combined with wealth) one of the most cultivated cavaliers. He possesses a select library of about a thousand volumes, which he has himself arranged according to the different classes of literature. His large palace in the street Toledo is adorned in a very tasty manner, principally with bas-reliefs by the hand of Canova. I found also here a picture, the original of which I had before seen and admired in Germany: a man and a youth who are returning on horseback from the chase, loaded with the spoil of wild beasts, and dragging a dead lion behind them. The youth is quite naked: the whole is in the antique style, very poetically conceived, and very striking in its effect.—The marquis possesses a garden which is compared to the hanging-garden of Semiramis, for it lies in the second story. But it

has one considerable advantage over its ancient prototype, in a pavilion containing a charming group of Venus and Adonis, by Canova. It is said to be not among the best productions of this excellent artist. However, the worst performance of Canova's chisel (if the word *bad* is in any of its degrees allowable as applied to them) is always so surprisingly beautiful, that a man of any feeling imagines it impossible in the first quarter of an hour to find defects.---- Every foreigner should endeavour to get acquainted by some means with this nobleman: he will not only find gratification from these works of art, but every other enjoyment which the society of a well-informed amiable man who speaks many European languages, and is kind and tender in his domestic connections, must ever afford. I know of nothing exceptionable in him, unless his being rather too profuse in his attentions to his guests.

THE STUDIES.

A STRANGER would not guess what is at Naples comprehended under this name. It is applied to both the royal library and the collection of antique statues. But it must not be supposed that any one *studies* there. The library is indeed open to the public every day, from eight in the morning till one; and during my stay I spent twenty whole forenoons there, but I hardly ever found any body except those whose duty confined them to the place. In Paris it is very different; there the inquisitive sit at long tables, and the under-librarian has enough to do in fetching the books that are wanted. I even saw Turks perusing Arabic writings. Here no one reads: all is solitary, but yet not still. The servants and assistants are so little used to see strange visitors, that they continually sing and talk aloud without having a conception that any one can be disturbed by it. The librarian is a polite man, who speaks a little French very badly.

As he had received a royal command to allow me the uninterrupted range of the library and manuscripts, he was so obliging as to appoint me a separate room, where I hoped to be quiet; but the sight of a person who without being compelled spent here four hours a day, was so strange, that one or another was every instant opening the door to look at me, till the novelty was over and I was left free from intrusion.

Near the principal entrance, among the regulations which are inscribed in marble, it is mentioned that nothing is to be given to any person employed in the library, and that none of them are to receive any present. A stranger, however, would be viewed with dissatisfaction who should regard this injunction. All eyes are anxiously directed towards him, and each hand appears prepared for taking money; so that for what is shewn him at an usual visit, he must pay considerably.

The building (if we consider it without the dirt which defiles it) is fine. A broad and curiously-perforated state staircase leads

to the great hall; which is about eighty paces long, and proportionably broad. The walls are two stories high, and are covered with books. Round the second story runs a narrow wooden gallery. The books are arranged according to the sciences, and over each division hangs a small tablet upon which is written what is to be found underneath; as, poetry, grammar, rhetoric, &c. The theological writings are the most numerous: though, in order to prevent their disproportionate number from being too striking, they are subdivided into several branches; as, fathers of the church, councils, scripture, &c. Altogether they form at least a sixth part of the whole.

They appear to think much of the collection of copper-plates; but compared with that at Paris, it is not worth mentioning. The manuscripts are pretty numerous; but those only are to be seen which are kept for shew, and which are ostentatiously displayed before every stranger. Among these latter are a bible elegantly illuminated, in which I observed that the serpent

who seduced Eve was depicted with the head of a woman: a Homer finely written, yet more remarkable for Raphael having painted his portrait in it; why he did this the attendant did not know, but supposed it to have been at the desire of a physician by whom this manuscript had been given to the library: a fairly written Virgil: letters of I know not what father of the seventh century: and lastly, a manuscript written with Tasso's own hand, which all persons should see for their comfort who write illegibly. I inquired for German manuscripts, but in vain: "There are some," was the answer; but none were produced. The manuscripts are contained in a distinct room, which, however, is not open to the public, but generally locked up. The custom of never lending out any book, even to well known inhabitants, deprives many of the use of the library, who neither keep carriages nor live near it. The number of volumes is said to amount to above eighty thousand.

The great hall is ornamented with very

indifferent paintings; and paved with coloured tiles, which form a very inelegant though indeed a very cleanly flooring. If we place ourselves in the centre, and utter a loud shout upwards, it is answered by a surprising echo.

When we leave the library, and again descend the beautiful staircase, we enter on the right hand a most disgustingly filthy and dark passage. Yet this is the place where a fine collection of ancient works of art, the famous Farnesian inheritance, is preserved. Here stands the Farnese Hercules, indignant at his degraded situation. Here must Flora wean herself from flowers, in a place of which the gloom would best suit the griefs of Agrippina. All these master-pieces are so well known that it would be superfluous for me to describe or even praise them. Even amidst the dust which consumes them they command reverence and admiration.—Here we find a preposterous monument of female vanity, which no stranger will look on without laughing. A Roman empress, I know not which, in her

sixtieth year was mad enough to have her image taken as large as life in the likeness of the Venus de Medici. The old head is most ridiculously contrasted with the tender youthful form and limbs. It appears indeed to have been the fashion among the female Romans to exhibit themselves in this admired form; for I found another copy of the same Venus, whose face was also a portrait. In this, however, the original was more pardonable, for the face is very pretty and interesting.—Several bas-reliefs are of great value; the best have been from ancient times enclosed in rude wooden frames with doors, as was formerly customary with altar-pieces. Some among them I would willingly have had explained to me; but we had merely a school-boy for our conductor, who had learnt to gabble over some names but could not answer a single question. There is, for example, upon one a young hero (the lad called him Alexander) upon whom a Genius is familiarly leaning; opposite to him sits a beautiful shy girl with downcast eyes (the boy called her

Helen), and near her a Venus; above the figures is a goddess, which our youth without any ceremony named the goddess of Eloquence. Over each figure is an inscription in Greek: the whole appeared to me very fine. Perhaps the man is prince Paris; if so, the rest would suit very well.---There is no catalogue of the different articles, but one is said to be preparing. I think this rather late for such a business, and perhaps they will do it much later. They also flatter themselves that the arts will be soon conducted to a less humiliating habitation. It is indeed high time, for I would lay a wager that the king's hounds are better lodged than the Farnese Hercules.

In this place also we find traces of French *attachment* to the works of art. They were, according to their rapacious custom, about to take possession of many articles, but were prevented. A beautiful group of Orestes and Electra, however, stands even now packed up; and indeed so miserably and stupidly packed, that a leg is broken, and the body of Orestes is cracked. Two heads

of Socrates and Homer likewise stand ready for transportation.

Before I leave the *Studies*, I must with gratitude mention one who with real kindness endeavoured, as far as related to the sciences, to fulfil all my wishes. It is the marquis Tacconi, one of the conservators of the royal library; a friendly man, and devoted to the arts. His fine and spacious habitation resembles a temple of the muses. His own library too is considerable, and possesses the finest and choicest editions. His collection of paintings is small but select. I saw among others, a Madonna which enchanted me: also the infant Jesus riding on a lamb; the idea charming, and the execution worthy the pencil of Raphael.

One remark often obtruded itself upon me while writing, and again recurs. I have seen such a number of pictures in France, Germany, and Russia, which are given out as the works of certain great painters, that it appears to me impossible for the life of one man to have produced so many master-

pieces.—I will take Raphael for an example: it is well known that he was not old, perhaps not more than thirty, when he died; and yet I have seen so many pictures ascribed to him, that if they were really all from his hand, he must have finished at least one every week. Is there then no authentic testimony of his works? If I only think on the palace of the Vatican, it appears to me impossible that he could have executed more than are there contained. Probably his best scholars have sacrificed their own fame to increase his.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE MANNERS, &c. OF THE NEAPOLITANS.

It would be too bold were I, after an abode of scarcely two months, to promise to enter at large on this subject. I will give but a few remarks, but they shall be just. The Neapolitans have one thing in common with the brutes: that at least they do not conceal their manners; and, as they feel not that any thing about them is im-

proper, they do not shun observation. It is therefore easy to gather the leading features: yet I shall confine myself to the higher and lower classes; of the middle class I know nothing.

If I were to say of a people, without naming them, that they are lazy, dirty, sensual, superstitious, violently fond of gaming, perfectly indifferent to the sciences, attached alone to ragged shew, strangers to honesty and fidelity, would it not be thought that I was speaking of Hottentots and Iroquois? Right: the higher classes in Naples are indeed the *savages* of Europe. They eat, drink, sleep, and game. They neither have nor want any other occupation than this last. The states of Europe are overthrown: they game not the less. Pompeii comes forth from its grave: they game still. The earth shakes; Vesuvius vomits forth flames: yet the gaming-table is not left. The splendid ruins of Pæstum, a few miles distant, shining as it were before every eye, must be discovered by strangers; for the Neapolitans are gaming.—The greatest dukes and

princes are keepers of gambling-tables. A prince Rufando, one of the most considerable noblemen of the country, keeps the first gaming-house in Naples; and besides his there are twenty others of the same description. Thither all the great world are driving at the approach of evening. Strangers must be presented by some acquaintance; yet this is only for form. The stranger makes a slight inclination to the host, and the latter as slightly returns it; but it is a rule that not a word is uttered. In other respects it is like being at a coffee-house: or worse than a coffee-house, for there one can have what one will for money; but here are no refreshments, except perhaps a glass of water after having ordered it ten times of the servant.

A large but ill-furnished drawing-room is the rendezvous of *rouge et noir* and faro. A pile of chairs heaped up in a corner of the room, proves that a numerous company is expected. Scarcely have the gaudy throng rushed in, when they seat themselves, with greedy eyes fixed on the heaps

of gold which glitter on the table. These meetings are called *converzationes*, but no one here must begin to *converse*. We hardly dare whisper single words: if any thing more is attempted, an universal hiss commands deep silence and attention to the mysteries of the game. Old women, particularly, sit either gathering up money with their long bony fingers; or with their green outstretched eyes fixed on the *rouge et noir* table, lamenting the capriciousness of fortune. Even handsome young women here degrade the dignity of their sex, setting beauty and the Graces at defiance. The princess N., for example, is a professed gamester. Many others come to make new conquests, or to secure their old ones; in both which businesses they lay no restraint on themselves. A stranger is at the first look apprised of each lady's favourite: the husbands are either absent, or concern themselves not the least about the women; for of the execrated Italian jealousy here is not a single vestige. Even divines and children game: for example, the daughter of the

marquis Berio, who is not more than eight years old. The marquis is one of the most enlightened noblemen.

Some maintain that this degrading conduct brings the prince Rufando yearly five thousand ducats. Others say that he receives no more than twelve ducats a day for converting his palace into a gaming-house. He himself does not hold the bank; but perhaps he has a share in it, and so both accounts may be true. The holder of the bank is *in his way* esteemed an honest man. This, at least, is certain: that he plays without suspicion; and sometimes, by express desire, tells out the sum gained twice, as an attentive bystander assured me he had seen. Another, no less to be depended on, informed me that the winner must in general be very quick in taking up the money gained; for if he does but turn round, some neighbour will ease him of the trouble. Perhaps this was only done through inadvertence; but *done* it is.

Whoever has been once introduced to these parties, may go daily in and out as he

would to a tavern; and can in his turn present other strangers, whose names are no longer remembered than his own is unless he plays very often and very high, for that is the only possible way of attracting the attention of the polite circles in Naples.

Thus till two in the morning they play away their time, money, health, and property. They then drive home, and sleep till noon; at which time they take a ride in the Villa Reale, where it is now the fashion to catch at the fresh air. The young gentlemen drive thither in a curricle, in order to shew their horses. Two, or at latest three, is the hour of dinner; after this follows a walk, either in the Santa Lucia, or upon the Magdelene bridge, or wherever the sun shines in the winter. They would, in reality, even care very little in their minds about the sun; except for the sake of displaying their charms, their dress, or their carriages, which last are of great importance to the Neapolitans. It is not absolutely necessary that these should be either costly or elegant: if they only appear tolerable,

with a pair of horses to them, it is enough; for nothing is dreaded more here than the terrible evil of going on foot. Thus they say of any one who has ruined himself by gaming, not "Poor man! he is starving;" but, "Poor man! he goes on foot." The Neapolitan horses have survived their fame: since the French, who have a laudable passion for every thing they can steal, have carried off their finest stallions. After this they repair to the theatre, to chatter; or home, to kill the time in solitude till the wished for hour again approaches. This is the daily round of a fashionable Neapolitan. Some among them (prince Angro, for example) who possess eight or ten villas, yet never stir out of Naples.

In order to render the *converzatione* more inviting for the younger part of the guests, the host sometimes gives a ball, in a small and intolerably hot room, miserably lighted. The company are negligently drest; the music is bad, and the dancing worse. This lasts a couple of hours, and is easily per-

ceived to be only a prelude to higher joys. —The noise and chattering of the ladies is more insupportable here than any where else in Europe, being sufficient to stun the ears of a stranger; and is accompanied with the most violent gesticulations of the face. The common and disgusting dialect of the place is broad and *bleating* (I must be pardoned this word, which is indeed appropriate), and the ladies speak it with as little restraint as the fishwomen. No one will accuse me of exaggeration, on hearing that the Neapolitans learn the Tuscan as a foreign language, just as the Pomeranian peasants learn high German. I have seen the advertisement of a master of languages, in which, besides the Latin, German, Dutch, and Spanish, he expressly offers also to teach the Tuscan. The Neapolitan dialect is as different from the true Italian, as the Siberian is from the Russian; and has just the same drawling as is peculiar to the Siberian peasants. Whoever understands both the Italian and Russian, will hardly be able to distinguish one from

the other when they are both spoken at once.—The circumstance of the ladies speaking the dialect of the common people, gives a proof of their total want of cultivation, and at the same time casts a censure on their lovers. One would suppose that most ladies would at least speak French; particularly now, as they so often come in close acquaintance with persons of that nation: yet we rarely find one speaking this language, even among the literati or nobles; for should any happen to use it, they pronounce it so intolerably bad that it requires some trouble to be understood. The present minister for foreign affairs, Micheroux, is an exception; he speaks well, and is upon the whole a pleasant man; and is not prevented by a painful disease from entertaining, even for hours, in an intellectual manner, those who visit him. But he is the descendant of a French family, and has spent much time in embassies at foreign courts.

Yet I forget that we are still at the ball: where while conversing we may be left in

the dark; for about eleven o'clock, as soon as the musicians retire, the candles in the room are extinguished whether the company are there or not. This is not done to save candles, but to give the company to understand that they should proceed to the gaming-table, which however is done by most without this hint; and now commences the grand scene. Each is thankful that the ball is over.

But I think I hear the reader exclaim, "Enough of gaming-companies: conduct us where no such vices pollute the palaces, or at least where commercial speculations only are carried on." I am sorry that I cannot fulfil this very moderate wish; but there are in reality no other societies in Naples than these infamous *conversationes*. Let it, however, be remembered, that I speak alone of Neapolitans: some foreigners have indeed introduced here the manners of their countries, and endeavour to keep them pure by admitting none but foreigners into their circles. I mention, for examples, the English minister Eliot, and

the Russian countess Skawronsky. The latter has resided here several years: she gives pleasant entertainments; which, notwithstanding her great age, she seasons with her humour. No Neapolitan can gain access to her: she is only visited, as it were, by birds of passage during their flight.—When I mentioned these, I should have omitted "for examples:" since they are the *only* persons who afford a refuge to a foreigner that hates gaming; unless indeed he should be disposed to commence an amour, which he will find particularly easy. I have been assured that the duchesses and princesses, both handsome and ugly, never allow a lover to languish in vain; but that one spirit prevails among them all.

From the terrible Italian jealousy the stranger has nothing to dread; it is no longer to be found except in novels. The husband does not lay the slightest obstacle in the way, and even that doubtful animal the *cicisbeo* exists no more. Conjugal Fidelity might be here depicted as flying, or concealing itself from ridicule: thus the

Neapolitans are the only people in Europe who at the representation of my "Stranger" laugh instead of crying, because they cannot conceive how any one should make so much of *a common trifle*. To what a pitch this mode of thinking is carried, and in how high a style such things are conducted, I will illustrate by two examples.

A married lady had *very properly* a young officer for her lover; of whom she *with equal propriety* became soon tired, and received another. The officer was so foolish as to take it to heart: he really loved the woman, and sought by every tenderness to allure her again to his arms. One day he met her alone: a mutual explanation took place; the lover was appeased, his entreaties were victorious; they were solemnly reconciled, and retired to an adjoining closet to renew their vows. Happy as a person loved and loving can be, the officer towards evening took leave of his reclaimed fair-one. He was a little struck upon meeting his rival near the house; "but," thought he, smiling, "he will be refused

admittance." He stood still to enjoy this triumph at a distance: the lover was *not* refused admittance. This disturbed the officer in the first instant, but in the second he comforted himself with thinking, "she must at any rate explain to him that he has nothing more to hope: with that intention she has received him, and the poor devil will soon return." Yet the poor devil did *not* soon return. A painful suspicion agonized the officer's breast; but a third time he took courage: "Such a conversation is not to be made an end of in a few minutes. The man will be troublesome; will entreat, rave, kneel: it is well known that on such occasions the same things must be a hundred times repeated; and after all, how difficult it is for vanity to persuade itself that it is no longer admired! The poor woman will have enough to do to support it; and shall I be so cruel as to mortify her by suspicion?" Thus he endeavoured to console himself; and as the visit was a pretty long one, he went home and resolved that the next morning the lady should give

him a circumstantial detail of the manner in which she had dismissed his rival. Instead of this, however, on the following morning he received a note from her in which she coldly informed him that notwithstanding their reconciliation, she had changed her mind, and was resolved never to see him again. Surprized and thunderstruck, he answered what love and despair dictated; and concluded by threatening to shoot himself if she continued in her cruel resolution. This she did: she acknowledged indeed that she had promised fidelity to him; but added that she could no other way get rid of him at the time, and henceforward her doors would be shut to him; and should he in reality shoot himself, it would increase her celebrity to have it known that for her sake so charming a youth had renounced life. The officer received this impudent note at a coffee-house: he rose suddenly, told some of his friends ha must take a journey, took leave of them, went home—and shot himself. The lady

is living, and continues the same line of conduct as before.

A duke who was esteemed the handsomest man in Naples, married an amiable woman of unblemished reputation, and who to his own astonishment remained when a wife still amiable and irreproachable. The duke, however, became dissatisfied; and paid his addresses with great fervour to a princess, whose name together with that of her lover I shall omit. He succeeded in obtaining favour with the new object of his passion, but only on one express condition; that as long as their connection lasted, he should live with his young and lovely wife merely as with a sister. He promised every thing; but he found this more easy than obeying, for a living evidence of his defalcation too soon appeared. The princess raved, and would hear nothing he had to say. In this dilemma he asserted that he was not the father of his wife's child. The princess started: for a married man to load himself with such a reproach, confounded even her

for a moment. Yet her jealousy demanded stronger proof; and he promised all. "If the child is not yours," said she, "send it immediately to the foundling-house." The duke left her, and sent his child thither accordingly; regardless of the agonies of the mother, of whose innocence all Naples remains convinced to this day.

Such examples, the number and variety of which are without bounds, may serve to encourage the stranger who is an admirer of intrigue in high life. He may assure himself that he need not hesitate at any thing which is usually esteemed an offence against propriety. Only one caution is to be given him; *to take care of his health.* Nor let the circumstance of the object of his passion being a duchess or a marchioness, lull his apprehensions; for the danger is no less on that account. Many of these ennobled fair-ones are injured in this point by their husbands, and they scarcely make a secret of such little inconveniences. It is well known that this complaint is of comparatively in-

ferior danger in warm climates, and therefore it is here not more regarded than a cold or a cough. I have learnt from the mouth of a physician that scarcely a family in the higher classes is free from it, and that every illness may be regarded as in some degree connected with this. It is true, a disfigured face rarely occurs except among the common people, who neglect or cannot afford timely assistance.

The few hours which gaming, debauchery, the theatre, &c. leave unoccupied, are devoted to religion. I have been informed that the genteel female sinners sometimes condescend to attend the sick in the hospitals, which perhaps turns out like the washing of the feet instituted by the emperor.—The disguised brotherhood consist partly of the first nobility. I have sometimes seen individuals of them begging money for the souls in purgatory, who might be considered as beaux among the spirits. The long hoods which covered them were of the finest snow-white linen, and on cool days they wore a small mantle

of scarlet over them; the pilgrim's hats which hung by the side appeared to be made of the softest beaver; and their shoes and silk stockings betrayed that the whole mummery covered a still better dress. They proceeded from house to house with an elegant bag, held it to every shop-keeper, and on receiving only a shake of the head went without complaint farther. They conceive that this miserable farce will ensure them the favour of heaven.

Superstition sometimes discovers itself in the most ludicrous manner. Lately at the theatre Florentini, a comedy by Federici was performing, when in the middle of the representation some pious ears were struck with the sound of the little bell which announces that the sacrament is carrying through the street to a sick person. A loud hissing followed; and some voices called to the performers to retire, and assigned the reason. With the rapidity of lightning all the players flew from the stage, and the whole audience were upon their knees. Be-

hind the scenes, decorated and painted actors and actresses were kneeling with heads bowed down, till the tingling of the bell was no more to be heard. This ceremony being over, the stage was again filled, and the play went on. Who would choose to reside in a place where such folly reigns, though Nature should have emptied her full horn as liberally as she has done here?

Confession is no where more practised than in Naples. During my frequent visits to the churches, I have observed that the confessionals (of which there are a great number) were never empty: and saw generally twenty women to one man; which, however, does not prove the fair sex the greatest sinners, but that the men are more obdurate.

Some have censured those travellers who allow themselves to condemn or ridicule the catholics, and this they do on the principle that every one should be allowed to believe what he will. This is certainly right, when the traveller has no other ob-

ject than to make a catalogue of curiosities. But those who travel not barely to *see*, but also to *think*, must give an opinion, even should it sometimes be wrong. Now I do not know why a bad religion is not as fit a subject of censure as a bad government. Both are equally pernicious as far as they tend to degrade the people into a state of stupid slavery, which must be the case when the whole system of either is actuated by one man or one class. In both cases the most oppressive despotism is produced. Hence arise the dreadful intolerance of the catholic religion, its desire of converting heretics, and its ridiculous presumption; properties which cannot be denied, and for the sake of which the silliest tales are invented to keep the people in ignorance.

Yet I would not have this despotism wholly deprecated. The despotism of Frederic gave a thousand times more happiness than a *republic* in the modern French style. For the same reason I should not blame the despotism of the catholic religion, were it universally exercised by judicious men.

But the despotism of stupidity is intolerable; and whoever feels in himself the power of exposing it, is bound to do so. Not from caprice, but a real and well-grounded aversion to the catholic church, do I laugh at her miserable trifles; nor shall I be hindered from so doing by the opinions of any one. Silence I should regard as cowardice; and would only be silent when I saw the people cheerful, virtuous, industrious, and flourishing. Then I should say, it was indifferent to me by what form of government or religion this delightful end was attained. In a word, each may be turned to the advantage of the people in the hands of wise men; but when blockheads, either spiritual or temporal, sit at the helm, even deism becomes oppressive, and republicanism insufferable.

One chief object of the refined superstition of the Neapolitans, is founded on the doctrine of purgatory. It is shameful to see how their pious simplicity is by this means abused. People masked and unmasked are to be seen daily and hourly

running through the streets, with bags and boxes, and in the most despicable manner enticing the people to part with their money which they have with difficulty earned or even begged. I have seen flames painted on many houses and churches, among which several heads both old and young appear with up-lifted hands supplicating the passers-by; or even carved in wood, and placed in a theatrical style before the holy booth where a trade in masses is carried on. Immense sums must thus every year pass through the hands of the priests, far exceeding any royal revenue. I am almost inclined to think that the government have done wisely in restoring the jesuits; as this may prove a powerful means of substituting a judicious priestly despotism for a stupid one. No more can at the instant be effected.

In every church innumerable masses are daily said, and even by several at the same time. The laziness of the Neapolitans finds daily and hourly its excuse in the churches. They must hear mass, that is a spiritual

duty: they infer, naturally enough, that the more they hear the better; and thus crowd into the churches, while they let their children starve at home. I think it must be very difficult to feel devotion in a place so ill calculated to inspire it: where all is confusion and noise; and where the *heretical* admirer of the arts walks about during the service, and can at pleasure have the curtain which conceals a fine altar-piece drawn away, even at the moment when the priest consecrates the host. In this manner I have for a few pence had many pictures shewn me, without having ventured to desire it.

Whoever is not satisfied with these proofs of the stupid superstition of the Neapolitans, let him recollect the blood of saint Januarius, which even yet on certain days is liquefied. The thing is so well known, and has been so frequently related, that I may spare myself the trouble of repeating it. It is generally believed that the liquefaction of the red matter is produced by the warmth of the priest's hands; but this is an error.

The small phial which contains what is called the blood, is inclosed in a large glass bottle, so as to leave an empty space between, which it would be difficult for the warmth of a hand to penetrate. Well-informed persons have assured me that the miracle is performed by chemical means, and therefore sometimes requires so much time; though it cannot fail if the bottle is sufficiently shaken. Few people, and even few priests, are in the secret; and among the latter class there are otherwise reasonable men who stedfastly believe in the miracle. When general Championet entered this city, he sent to request that the archbishop would liquefy the blood, in order to prove to the people the *divine mission* of the French. At first the prelate refused; but when the general informed him that if he continued obstinate, he would *himself* work the miracle, he yielded: for which the court, in my opinion very unjustly, sent him afterwards into exile.

I have only a word to say on the uncleanliness of the Neapolitans. Yet I will

not assert that among the higher classes it extends to their sitting-rooms, for I saw many among them both clean and elegant. But their houses externally, their passages, halls, and stairs, equal every thing that can be experienced in the dirtiest darkest alleys or bye-places of any populous city.

Of the attention paid by the great to the sciences, the booksellers' shops enable us to form an accurate estimate. There are indeed many of these; but religious books, and some translations from foreign languages, are all that they have to offer the inquirer. If we complain, the proprietors answer with the candid confession that nobody in Naples writes, nobody reads, and consequently nobody buys books, except when some great man happens to purchase a collection for shew. The same may be said of paintings, which are also bought only for fashion's sake. With statuary it is still worse: I have not been able to discover a single artist of any eminence in this line. Should there be one, it must be only for sepulchral ornaments.

Let us descend a step lower, to the middle class. In other countries this order is composed of tradespeople and men of letters. Here, however, there are no men letters; and their place is filled up by the lawyers, who are not much esteemed, and whose number is equal to that of the lazaroni. A trifling circumstance has lately come to my knowledge, which is no proof of the strict decorum of this class: A German saw a handsome girl, the modest daughter of an attorney, at an open window; who pleased him so much, that he wished to become acquainted with her. To accomplish this, he without ceremony wrote her a note requesting a meeting. This was immediately answered; the girl modestly informing him that his visit would be very agreeable to her, and if he could let it take place in the evening he would meet some of her relations also. He went, and found a respectable company; was kindly received, and repeated his visit frequently. It may be said that this was only laudable hospitality, and it would indeed

in Russia have been nothing remarkable. But hospitality is here unknown, and it is much more probable that its place was supplied by mere speculation. Many similar anecdotes confirm me in this opinion.—At the same time, I know too little of the middle class to venture giving a judgment of its manners. But this I know, that it is as ignorant and superstitious as the higher; and that with them the lottery takes the place of *rouge et noir* among their superiors, and appears to be followed with equal ardour.

I have been present at one drawing: it is a popular spectacle which no stranger ought to omit witnessing. A number of men drest in black, with curled wigs, assemble in a large room at the town-hall *(vicaria)* every fortnight for about a quarter of an hour; for which condescension they are amply paid. A charity-boy, as is usual in other countries, draws the numbers: he is hung over with relics; and before he enters his office, is blessed by the priest, and sprinkled with holy-water. Nearly a thou-

sand persons had forced themselves into the room; and though every door and window was open, yet the air was so impregnated with mephitic vapour, that I will venture to say it would extinguish a lighted candle. The shouting and hissing of this multitude is even worse than the horrible smell: I was often tempted to think myself in a madhouse. Whenever one of the grave gentlemen who were to preside over the ceremony appeared, he was received with a loud and universal hiss for being rather too late.—The turning of the wheel was attended with a most hideous noise. The first-drawn ticket (taken from the boy by one of the presidents, and given to a lazarone behind him) was received with universal applause, and the building resounded with shouts. On the contrary, the second number was violently hissed. —I now hastened out, for fear of being squeezed to death.

On the stairs also I found business was going forward. A pious man had taken his station to beg money for the souls in pur-

gatory: this was no bad speculation, particularly *before* the drawing; as each then wished to procure the favour of heaven. Besides this, the stairs were filled with begging cripples; and, that the leading features of the Neapolitan character might be complete (superstition, love of gaming, poverty, and filthiness), it was permitted for every one to use the landing-place for easing the necessities of nature.

When I reached the street, I found the crowd who were shouting above multiplied repeatedly. A heavy shower fell, but no one regarded it. The rabble with and without umbrellas formed a long thick line, from the *vicaria* to the building (at the distance of several streets) where the prizes were paid. When a ticket of this description was drawn, it was announced from a window to a porter standing for that purpose in the street; who immediately proceeded with the intelligence to the beforementioned house, stopping however by the way to impart the news to the anxious multitude. As soon as the mob perceived, at a

distance, one of these porters, all was noise and confusion; and thousands of hands were waving in the air, for without using his hand no Neapolitan can speak. For half a minute every lip was in motion, in communicating the important observations which this great event produced: but the storm was soon over, and all still again till another porter appeared; who with a second number created the same uproar. It was worth the trouble, to witness this scene.

The rage for lotteries extends itself farther here than any where else, because superstition finds thereby an ample field to work in. It is truly ridiculous to see what trifles influence the Neapolitans in their choice of numbers. Should any lounger who has nothing else to do, write five numbers by chance upon a wall, and remark that these will be sure to be prizes, it is probable that out of ten persons who see the numbers, eight will choose them. This diabolical passion has seized the low-

est classes, and every tattered beggar carries the trifle he has received to the lottery.

However dark the colours are in which I have sketched the Neapolitan character, they must become yet more so as I descend to the common people. With the vices of the gentry they combine some which are properly their own; yet men of respectability and foreigners who have passed five-and-twenty years here, assure me that they are in reality true-hearted and generous. I neither can nor wish to deny what these persons say, for they have had too frequent opportunities of observing them. To me it is very clear that uncultivated people may commit great crimes, and yet be really willing to do kind actions; their vices being only habits.

Theft is here very common, in spite of the punishments by hanging and flogging. A whimsical story is told of an executioner who took his shoes off under the gallows that he might ascend the ladder with more

ease; and while he was performing his office, and all eyes were directed to the unhappy criminal, another thief stole the shoes from under the gallows. Many strange and severe police laws, which owe their origin to the present chief magistrate, the active duke of Ascoli, prove how necessary it must have been to adopt unusual measures against this vice. Every stranger, for example, who lodges at an inn, is requested by the landlord to deliver him a list of all the valuables he has with him. He is at liberty to refuse, but is to give the landlord a written declaration even of this. But in case the landlord has neither this list nor a written refusal, and a robbery is committed in his house, still he must replace every thing. He is also obliged to do the same, should he neglect to inform the stranger of the regulation. This last, however, appears to be generally the case; for I only became acquainted with this custom by reading the printed police regulations, which I procured. We are, at all events, safest at an inn; and therefore I advise no

one to live in a private house, though he should find it somewhat cheaper.

During my stay at Naples, baron B——, a German, who had taken furnished lodgings, found one evening upon his return home, that all his property was stolen, though he had given his key to the footman. The fellow was immediately taken into custody, but boldly denied having any knowledge of the theft.—The Italian hired servants are indeed mostly the vilest set of thieves upon earth. They appear to be worse paid here than in other cities, but they know how to recompense themselve for this seeming moderation. It is an established rule with the person from whom a stranger hires a carriage, to give them a certain sum daily; and hence they look very displeased if we attempt to go on foot. They also purchase every thing which the stranger wants, and charge double for it. It is of no use that we buy for ourselves: our servant stands behind us, and makes signs with his fingers to shew the tradesman how much to overcharge for *his* advantage;

and should he not comply, the servant brings him no more customers. It is to be wished that prince Ascoli would give some of his attention to these fellows.

Those who lend carriages (like the inn-keepers) must be answerable for every thing which may be stolen out of them; and as they can only seek recompence from their drivers, they must take care that the latter are honest. Every hired carriage is marked not only with a number, but also with the place to which it belongs; as Naples, Portici, &c. Should a traveller be robbed, he has nothing more to do than give the police-office the number of the carriage; and even if he has no witness of the theft, his own testimony will be sufficient, if he is a person in other respects of a good character. This latter circumstance is indeed so severe against the owners of carriages, that I think it can only be excused by some very weighty reason; and what can this be but the increasing frequency of robberies, which it is expected by these means to suppress?

It is probable they have been productive of benefit; for except the above-mentioned instance, I have heard of none of the kind during my stay, and of picking pockets I saw nothing.

Formerly the Neapolitans had a frequent habit of stabbing each other in the breast with knives on the slightest quarrel. At present, however, this exists no more. We may pass the streets by day or night as securely as through our own apartments. This happy change has also been effected by a strict ordinance of the duke of Ascoli. No person whatever, except officers in uniform, can appear in the streets armed, or venture to make any disturbance; for besides the punishment of the law, the offender receives upon the spot military correction, either with a stick, whip, or the pillory. The prince has enforced respect for these regulations by a newly-formed guard, drest in black and yellow, and distinguished from the common sbirri by the privilege of entering houses and arresting any person with-

out distinction, not excepting officers. The severity of this measure is another melancholy proof of its necessity.

The Italians are in general extremely irritable and revengeful, though not malicious. In the first moments of their fury they are not masters of themselves. A supposed injury must be revenged on the spot; and, if possible, with a stiletto. I once saw a lad who had been wounded by another in the head with a stone. He ran after the offender, but could not overtake him. He foamed with rage, bit his handkerchief, and tore it with his teeth. This strange eruption of his fury often returned; and after he had gone away apparently quite calm, I heard him suddenly again roaring at a distance, and saw him again biting his handkerchief. Had this fellow caught his adversary, and not been previously disarmed of his knife by the beneficent duke of Ascoli, he would have become a murderer.

In the liveliness of their sensations, the Italians are children, for they scream; the Russians boys, for they sing; the Germans

youths, for they are visionaries; the French men, for they act; the English sages, for they are silent. It is not uncommon to hear such an outcry in the street, that we should believe there was murder; and when we approach, find it only a friendly conversation. It may be easily conceived that with such irritability, the impure passions would become even frightful.---The detestable Greek passion ranges here at large, enervating the souls and bodies of its victims. The clergy, and even its supreme head here, are charged with living in familiar intercourse with this vice: but surely these are not so much to be blamed as the superiors of the catholic church, who could remedy the evil by allowing the priests to marry, as long as this is refused; and as long as the church obstinately and senselessly persists in a measure which not only nature, but their own primitive writers disapprove, or at least have never recommended. Yet even this vice is less injurious to the peace of society than the destruction of connubial happiness, the sedu-

cing of women, the production of illegitimate children, and the thus rooting up of domestic felicity.

The charge which is here laid against the monks, rests naturally upon uncertain reports. The truth is covered with the veil of the church; which, though torn, no one dares to destroy. The common people are severely punished for it, as I have seen, by whipping through the streets; and one who had added the crime of murder to his brutality, I saw hanged.—As an exhibition of this latter description designates the characteristic of the nation, I may be allowed to dwell upon it a short time.

When the malefactor has received sentence of death, he passes three days before his execution in a chapel adjoining the prison. Here he remains till his fatal hour arrives. The disguised white brotherhood I have before mentioned, never leave him for a moment: and they not only prepare him for a christian death, but also provide for his body as well as his soul; supplying

him with whatever food he wants. The expence of this, indeed, must be inconsiderable; as the greatest luxury the poor sinner wishes, is seldom more than a dish of macaroni. I have been assured that they do even more: and if the culprit is father of a family, they lighten his breast of the care for his wife and children by promising to take care of them, and afterwards faithfully perform this engagement. If this is true, I willingly pardon them their ridiculous masquerade.

On the day of the execution, the people are running through the street during the whole morning to beg money for masses to redeem the soul of the criminal (though yet alive) from the pains of purgatory. During the preceding night a gallows is erected, generally in the market-place *(mercato)*; but so negligently and unconspicuously that a stranger would hardly conceive its use. It consists of merely a couple of small posts driven into the ground, and another laid across them. The whole apparatus is not

much higher than a door, and looks more like a field-gate than an instrument of capital punishment. A low inclosure of boards, slightly put together, and open on one side, surrounds it.

I hired a window opposite to the scene. To avoid the pressure of the crowd, I drove to the spot two hours before the execution, which was not to take place till four in the afternoon. The inclosure, however, was already surrounded by people. A detachment of dragoons was stationed in two lines, one on each side. In every street were armed sbirri, and a patrole of them in the market-place. The multitude gradually collected by thousands, and soon presented an impressive spectacle. In Naples every window has a balcony, and every house a flat roof. All these were crowded; and as most of the roofs were without either a railing or parapet, and the people so rash as to stand close to the very edge, it was impossible to banish the reflection that should the least pressure take place in the

b:e't part, those who stood before must be precipitated by dozens into the street, and dashed to pieces.

Towards four o'clock the market resembled a full-grown corn-field. A humming like a distant waterfall filled the air; occasionally interrupted by the voices of boys and women who had fruit or pastry to sell, for where human beings are collected selfishness will ever be found in one form or another. The number of spectators above and below I conceive, upon a moderate calculation, to have amounted to twenty thousand. The populace naturally pressed as near as possible to the inclosure which surrounded the gallows; and, no doubt, conceived themselves justified in doing so, because many divines, officers, and other well-drest persons, did the same. But they had forgotten that the reign of *liberty and equality* had been long at an end here, and were rather roughly reminded of it by the dragoons; for the commanding officer, instead of having the ground previously

kept by a detachment on each side of the inclosure, allowed the soldiers to stand quietly looking on till the crowd had become impenetrable, and then ordered three or four men with drawn sabres to go among them. The soldiers, in order to appear of the more importance, gallopped like madmen into the crowd; cutting among them with their sabres as if they had been so many thistles. Such conduct was unseasonable and disgusting, and I confess I was astonished at the composure with which this outrage was received. Whose fault would it have been if a tumult had arisen? if the offended populace had dragged one of the dragoons from his horse, and murder had ensued? I know that the people alone would have been punished: and yet the commanding officer was the first and only person guilty.

It was near four o'clock when the bustle in a neighbouring street announced the arrival of the chief performer in this tragedy. In the front, between four or five dragoons,

rode a ragged fellow carrying a red flag; and his horse was led by just such another. These were the executioners. When they came under the gallows, one of them planted the bloody standard in the ground, and left it waving. He then took off his coat, turned up his sleeves, and entertained himself merrily with the by-standers. I thought him, in that moment, Satan personified. A full half-hour before the arrival of the executioners, four of the disguised white brotherhood had brought a bier, and sat down upon it to rest themselves. The scene of action was now horribly decorated: exhibiting the gallows with the rope, and the ladder resting upon it; the bier, upon which leaned the four spectres; the hangman, with his turned up sleeves and his infernal grin; an assistant who resembled him; and near them, the bloody banner. My heart recoiled within me.

A long train of sbirri now approached, in the midst of whom flamed the torches of

the white brothers, preceded by a cross carried high above the heads of the multitude. The poor wretch was dragged through the town to a church, where he received the last spiritual offices; and then led on foot, or rather carried (for he was half-dead when he arrived), to the place of execution. Here he was allowed to kneel a few minutes; after which the hangman placed the rope on his neck, and ascended the ladder. The criminal followed him, to my astonishment, almost without the help of the assistant executioner; slowly and cautiously indeed, his hands being bound. His face was uncovered. He had no sooner ascended, than the executioner fastened the rope to the gallows; but was so long about it, that I conceive this delay must have been dreadful for the culprit. In the mean time the white brothers endeavoured to shorten the time by prayers: and one of them, raising the cross to him, harangued audibly on the joys which awaited him in the lap of eternity; for which, however, the sallow

paleness of death that overspread his countenance did not express much eagerness. At length the hangman had fixed his knot: when, taking the malefactor by the body, he threw him down from the ladder; and at the same instant springing upon his shoulders, rode upon him, and endeavoured to dislocate his neck, while his assistant hung on the feet of the unfortunate wretch, and swinging about with him in the air, pulled them down with all his strength. I do not deny that this method of hanging may be advantageous for the criminal, as he can by no means suffer long in whatever way the knot may be tied. But the spectacle afforded by thus strangling a human creature is horrible. The four white masks continued to hold the cross close before the face of the poor wretch, and to pray, after his neck was dislocated; perhaps to conceal the horrid physiognomy.—When the executioner thought the man was dead, he did not take the trouble of descending by the ladder, but let himself very commo-

diously slide down the body. I should have liked to see the sleep of this fellow the following night: if it was a quiet one, it presented the most keen satire upon humanity.

Hitherto the populace had been very quiet; but as soon as they saw the criminal hanging, they ran away (as if it had been preconcerted) on all sides with a loud outcry, and then suddenly turned back again to view the remainder of the tragedy. It is impossible for me to account for this universal and sudden movement. A friend who stood near me said he had witnessed the same at another recent execution, and had then regarded it as a symptom of disapprobation; partly arising from the executioner's having tortured the criminal, and partly because the offence was merely that of having clipped the Neapolitan piastres, which damaged coin the treasurer afterwards bought in at a cheap rate, and having stamped it with a new edge, issued it again for the full value. It must be confessed,

If the anecdote is true, it is doubtful *who* should properly have been hanged, and that a sign of dissatisfaction among the people was not to be condemned. But in the present instance no grounds for such a feeling existed, and the executioner performed his part like a proficient. It remains to me inexplicable what the people meant by running and their outcry. This motion of ten or fifteen thousand persons at the same instant, was indeed enough to inspire terror; but it was immediately over. They looked on peaceably while the body was being taken from the gallows, laid upon the bier, and carried away by the white brothers.

During the whole execution, the inclosure had been surrounded by sbirri, though with averted faces. The Blues, a regiment consisting almost entirely of foreigners, were nearly all in the market-place: unarmed it is true, and only as spectators; but, no doubt, privately arranged for action should they have been wanted. Except these,

no soldiers were to be seen; and it is therefore but fair to conclude that this regiment is composed of hanging amateurs.

But to return to my sketch of the popular character.—That the Neapolitan rabble are lazy, is what I will not positively affirm, though it has been asserted so often. They have no employment, and therefore must be idle; they are thus lazy by habit, but not by nature. It is true, there are at all hours of the day thousands of idlers standing in the streets; but let only an occupation be given them. If the government knew how to profit by their power, they might effect much with these people. The mechanics are always to be seen industriously working before their doors; but what are the thirty or forty thousand lazaroni to do? If no occupation is given them, they must finally become common thieves; and, naturally enough, from this all other vices must flow. Yet I must confess that they are abstemious, for I have never seen a drunkard among them.

TAYLOR INST. OXFORD

From these slight observations, I think I may venture to conclude that the higher classes in Naples are incorrigible; that the present generation of them is quite degraded; and that nothing but a gradual and suitable education, perhaps by the help of the jesuits, can ever radically amend them. But as to the common people, on the contrary, let them only have *employment*, and lighten the yoke of superstition a little, they will soon become industrious, honest, and opulent.

I cannot close this subject without mentioning one more particular in the Neapolitan character, with which it is at this moment strongly impressed. I mean their bitter hatred of the French. From the highest to the lowest, this sentiment is deeply rooted. They give themselves no trouble to conceal it; and I have heard expressions, the imprudence of which (having been uttered to a stranger) could only be excused from the fullness of their hearts. Their hatred is only equalled by their fear:

they submit to every thing; and bow their necks to the yoke of arrogance which, out of their own country, is so peculiar to the French. One of my friends lately saw a drunken French soldier intrude upon and insult a Neapolitan officer, without the latter venturing to have him arrested; and he was even at last obliged to take refuge in a coffee-house, and escape by a back-door, to avoid further abuse and ill-treatment. It is true, when the French ambassador, Alquier, hears of such things, he has the offenders punished very severely; but the victor finds always in the flight of the vanquished a fresh instigation to wanton outrage. For this reason the Neapolitans go as much as possible out of the way of the French.—A striking example of this has come within my own knowledge. A German merchant happened accidentally to fall into company with some French officers. They went together to see the royal porcelain manufactory, and the officers wished to make some purchases. They all, how-

ever, were refused admittance; under the pretext that a previous express permission was necessary. When the merchant afterwards separated from the officers, he was called back, and informed that *he* was at liberty to see the manufactory at pleasure.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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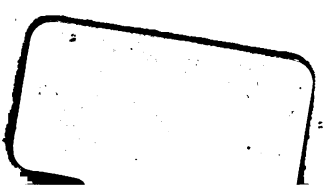
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